Arab Ba'th Socialist Party

UTION OF ARAB REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGY

Elyâs Farah

Unity Freedom Socialism

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NATIONAL THOUGHT

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Editor's Note

The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party regards all Arabs as being part of one nation both in the cultural and spiritual sense. The different countries in which they live, make up a politically and economically united fatherland. In the Party's documents, «the Arab fatherland» means all the Arab countries. Each of these is a «qotr» which, literally translated, means country; in the Ba'th context, it should be read as province or region. The adjective «qotri» (provincial, regional) is used when referring to an individual country. The adjective «qawmi» (national), on the other hand, is used when referring to all the countries which together make up the one fatherland. Thus, the National Directorate deals only with matters concerning the whole fatherland. Each Regional Directorate deals with matters within its own country. As for example, the Lebanese or Jordanian Regional Directorate etc.

The word Ba'th can be translated as meaning revival, resurgence or renewal. Hitherto, resurgence seems to be the meaning which is preferred by Arab intellectuals and foreign Arab experts.

"Thought is itself a force in history, a priceless revolutionary force. The simple fact of inserting the Arab cause into the framework of a global theory is a primary contribution towards enabling the Arab revolutionary movement to set out on a firm foundation..."

Michel 'Aflaq

Introduction

To gauge the measure and the power of Arab revolutionary ideology and pierce its secret, we need only call to mind the conflicts which opposed the various ideologies prevalent in Arab territory throughout the history of the present Arab struggle, i.e. over the last quarter of a century.

On the one hand, the total inability of the previous dominant ideologies to grasp the reality of this particular phase of history stands revealed. These, in fact, succeeded in defining neither its essential contradictions nor the general laws imposed by the struggle, on which the life of the Nation hinges today. In other words, they proved incapable of perceiving the meaning of the polemics over the contemporary Arab experience or of understanding the bond linking it with the new revolutionary current in the countries of the Third World; here nations and proletarian masses —victims of injustice— have associated class-struggle against exploitation and under-development with the struggle for national freedom, in the face of colonialism and fragmentation.

On the other hand, this ideology, to which both a movement and a party are affiliated, has become the supreme guide for revolutionary action of the Arab Nation in its entirety, because it expresses faithfully and precisely the aspirations of the people and the proletarian Arab masses; it has, moreover, outlined the path for

the Arab struggle and defined both its line of conduct and its objectives.

Arab revolutionary ideology has at last, after passing through various stages, reached maturity. It is now following its natural evolution, which will lead to full development and renewal and which corresponds to that of historic reality and thought in the Arab world.

A study of the evolution of Arab revolutionary ideology cannot be separated from the study of the movement which has developed and grown under its impetus. This ideology, while contributing to the sucess of the Arab revolutionary movement, was concerned with both the positive and negative experiments of the movement.

Arab revolutionary ideology crystallized and developed parallel to the movement's evolution. It was, therefore, inevitable that it should suffer the consequences of the crises shaking it. From the very outset, the practical application of the ideology with its watchwords Unity, Freedom and Socialism, brought about a crisis which revealed the backwardness of the Arab revolutionary movement in relation to its theory. In spite of attempts to draw the lesson from constant modifications, the movement was unable to master or amend the situation or change its course.

This backwardness of theory was the cause of the deterioration created by the political and economic changes which took place in certain Arab Regions during the sixties. Political and economic decisions, which have often been revised, lost their scientific revolutionary character; these were stamped by political opportunism and were devoid of socialist planification and a national dimension. Changes were, consequently, restricted to a few Regions, unrelated to the Nation as a whole, and were in opposition to the teaching of global Arab revolution. These changes, appear as heterogeneous and

demagogic improvizations, unrelated to the revolutionary values on which Arab revolutionary ideology has always insisted, remained superficial and even discredited them in the eyes of the popular masses.

Opportunists and climbers, thinking only of themselves and the preservation of their own interests, made of power a counter-revolutionary force, in contradiction with the interests of the Arab revolution. During the sixties their role was confined to slowing down the activity of true militants — those who soldered their destiny to that of the Arab revolution and the proletarian masses, those who fought under the flag of Arab revolutionary ideology. Opportunists who spread confusion were, however, doomed to fail. They accused Arab revolutionary ideology of being the cause of their ill-success and taxed it with backwardness, inefficiency and obsolescence; they accused it of stagnation and made the doctrine out to be incapable of renewal. Their desire was to wrench it from its principles and alienate it from its vocation. They also attributed to it principles belonging elsewhere.

The state of uneasiness which followed on the failure of the experiment in unity (and revealed the need to return to the origins of the ideological crises which had shaken the Arab revolutionary movement) was accompanied by a feeling of resignation and, at the same time, by one of hatred for the movement itself. The latter became the target of attempts to destroy and defame it and of falsifications aiming at the annihilation of its strength. In other words, these manoeuvres attacked the movement's ideology. Out of this state of things, confusion was born between a sincere desire for genuine renewal on the one hand and, on the other, attempts, hidden behind a call to resurgence, which were simply a parody and a deformation of truth.

The Arab revolutionary movement was unable to rise

to the level required by its ideology, but the latter, on the other hand, was able to hold its ground at the level required by the particular phase in history. The movement, in fact, deviated from its own basic theory and failed to submit it to necessary study and analysis. Its analytical methods did not enable it to discover the close, reciprocal bonds which link together Unity, Freedom and Socialism, and it failed to solder these objectives indissolubly with a skilful tactical strategy for political struggle. The movement was kept prisoner by the very genius of its ideology — of which it was proud and which it continued to defend — without ever conjugating its efforts to fathom its real content. The day the movement was forced to go into action, it encountered a crisis which buffeted it just as much as its ideology. Those in power, who regarded the Arab revolutionary movement and its ideology as a means to their own ends and to ensure success, gave full rein to their hatred for the movement's ideology "like backward children who expect their father to provide for all their needs or like juvenile delinquents who commit crimes to revenge themselves on their fathers for giving them life".

Some of these offspring became professional liars and slanderers and tried to avenge themselves in a thousand and one ways on the ideology which forms the basis of the Arab revolutionary movement. The most treacherous of these was lip-service to the ideology, while doing everything possible to distort, destroy and plot against it.

The aim of our present study is to denounce the conspiracies being hatched against Arab revolutionary ideology and which try to deviate it from its vocation, retard its evolution and veil the contradictions which exist between Union in theory and its practical application in the framework of the Arab revolutionary experiment. It also aims at indicating the healthy, natural way for this experiment to evolve.

Part One

Chapter I

Ideology

Our era is characterized by the accentuated importance of ideological strife. Many people are convinced that political action can only reach the level now required if basically consolidated by an ideological line, i.e. by a coherent system of thought known as an "ideology", capable of giving specific direction to a human group. The word itself is relatively new. Previous to the Enlightenment (the century preceding the French Revolution), politics were defined as an occupation, activity or experience reserved for those who, at the King's command, carried out specific functions and conducted affairs of state.

In 1690, a book called "A Treatise concerning the true original extent and end of Civil Government" by the English philosopher John Locke, was published in London. Locke was a fierce opponent of both individual and absolute power and of the concept of divine right. In this work, he described the searching of conscience which was sweeping Europe at the time, and suggested a new ideological, political and critical orientation, which was the fruit and the expression of an ideology based on empiric philosophy, as already set out in his previous work, "An Essay concerning Humane Understanding".

The philosophic tendency which characterized the Enlightenment can be resumed in the five words:

1. Individual
2. Reason
3. Nature
4. Happiness
5. Evolution

It differed from philosophical thought in the classical sense. It was not seeking abstract truth and it did not stop at pure theory, but sought rather the general direction of an ideology aspiring to realization in various domains of a profound change in human behaviour. The French men-of-letters, Montesquieu, author of "L'Esprit des Lois" (Spirit of the Laws) and Rousseau, author of "Le Contrat Social" (The Social Contract), laid the foundations of an ideology highlighting the greatness and hegemony of the People. In the same way, the slogan of the French Revolution "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" opened the way to ideological tendencies which were to leave their mark on the 18th century. It was Napoleon, apparently, in a spirit of disparagement and contempt, who coined the word "ideology" to designate theoretical reasoning unrelated to fact. It was not until the 20th century that the notion of "ideology" began to clarify and diverge to some extent from abstract philosophic concepts and metaphysical speculations and began to define comprehensive ideas on which society could be based. These ideas take into consideration the evolution of history and act upon it indirectly through the political organizations which adopt them.

"The Encyclopaedia of the 20th Century", published in 1931, defines ideology as "a system of ideas taking form in political or social belief and inspiring the actions of a government or a particular party". In Lalande's "Vocabulaire Technique et Critique de la Philosophie"

(6th edition, 1958) the Marxist interpretation of the word "ideology" is given as "a thought which expresses the vital interests of a particular social class".

In the Larger Soviet Encyclopaedia we find a Marxist-Leninist definition: - "Ideology is the science concerned with study of the laws governing natural and social evolution". This definition corresponds to a coherent and finalized entity, with which the working class and communist workers' parties all over the world claim kinship.

In his book "Les Idéologies Négro-Africaines d'Aujourd'hui", published in Paris in 1965, L.V. Thomas gives a more elaborate series of definitions:

1. Ideology, in its wider meaning, is a system of ideas to which a social group is affiliated, and which expresses just as much the centres of interest as the interests of the group.
2. Ideology, in its restricted meaning, is "a system of ideas elaborated with a view to action, expressing a particular vision of reality and acting as an impetus to change and transform the actual state of things".
3. Used derogatorily, ideology is "an unattainable mythical ideal, either well behind or well in advance of reality". This is Karl Marx's definition. (Ibid).

In the light of these definitions, ideology appears as a system of ideas, a vision of the world and of the state of society, which can serve as a basis for any common action. It bears no resemblance to individual thought - having neither its elasticity nor its malleability - because it constitutes a programme of action. The distance separating ideology and philosophy is comparable to that which separates applied and pure science. Ideology is primarily concerned with political and social science, but is in no way limited to these fields. We can now make a distinction between two different types of ideology —

between partial and global ideology and between religious, nationalist, fascist, democratic, bourgeois, socialist, liberal, communist and subversive versions.

To tell the truth, ideology, in its accepted definition, prepares the foundation of a "party".

At the beginning of the 19th century, the concept of ideology began to take form. In the middle of the 20th century, parties founded on a particular ideology came into being. Ideology acts as an intermediary between religion, philosophy and science on the one hand and society on the other. No social re-birth can dispense with it, for it helps to concretize the global image of reality. It enables us to situate the context of an evolutionary stage within society and also to place it in relation to global evolution and the whole of humanity.

The concept of ideology has evolved. Mannheim has emphasized several aspects of this in his work "Ideology and Utopia", in dealing with the transition from the phase of partial to that of global ideology (in other words, to a global vision of the universe) and presenting ideology as a subject for study in a new scientific branch —sociological knowledge[1].

During the 19th century, Marxism was able to extirpate ideology from its Utopian frame-work and to confer on it scientific status.

At a later date, the Third World underwent experiences enabling it to elaborate ideologies as a result of reflection and a struggle to evolve sound theory in the very areas of the world most exposed to injustice, where the most extreme aspects of fragmentation and underdevelopment are encountered, thereby constituting the most favourable conditions for the outbreak of revolution.

1. Barrion: *What is Ideology?,* translated by As'ad Rizq: Beirut - 1971

These experiences helped to consolidate ideology and added an even stronger revolutionary content, with a more sincere, more realistic and more human aspect. Ideology was no longer a static collection of ideas and prejudices; it had become a kind of dialectic, an expression of the unity of theory and practice — of theoretical and practical strife.

Present-Day Societies are Ideological Entities

In so far as they are ideological entities, present-day societies, by the very evolution and nature of our era, are characterized by the presence of several ideological currents — all the more so in countries going through revolutionary stages. For them revolution is not simply a political and social phenomenon, but is the bearer of a civilizing, cultural and intellectual mission. It radically transforms both the vision and concept of life in relation to a given society and the values on which it is based. Revolutionary ideology is born during the period of transition which prepares society to attain another way of life — a new way destined to efface the traces of all that went before. This is the ineluctible issue for any nation engaging in a fight against colonialism, fragmentation, under-development and class-exploitation in all its forms. As Jacques Arnauld reminds us in his book, "Du Colonialisme au Socialisme", the principal characteristic of major revolutions is that the renewal of social, economic and political structures is not for them an end in itself. This thirst for renewal tends to produce another kind of man, heralded and introduced by the new ideology. It is for this reason that all revolutionary movements, regardless of their tendencies, confer on ideology, unequivocally, the role of the matrix of history.

Although considering modes of production as the foundation of all doctrine, dialectical materialism emphasizes the importance of revolutionary awareness and of the principle that the individual attains freedom through his recognition of the laws governing historic and social evolution. In the same way, schools which believe in the intervention of matter, instinct, biology, behaviour, physical and social environment are in agreement in conferring on ideology a primary role in human experience today. The revolutionary character of a transitional phase, during which radical mutations take place, brings into evidence an ideology's universal nature; it deepens and spreads because it reflects the awakening of a global, general awareness. Ideology is thus a vital necessity, inherent in the very nature of a transitional phase, and an inspiration to the revolutionary and popular vanguard. In the measure that class-structure and vanguard organization incarnate revolutionary ideology with a maximum of fidelity, political action and the ideological standpoint adopted increase in stature and become endowed with a historic, civilizing message.

Ideological frailty and lack of strategic perspectives, on the contrary, reduce political action to superficial tactical operations, incapable of an effective impact on reality. There are many incidents in history to illustrate this truth. In Russia during the 19th and 20th centuries, many revolutionaries confined themselves to political action and partial reforms, having at their disposal neither strategy nor a well-thought-out revolutionary ideology and were, in consequence, doomed to failure. They were content with revolt against standing social and political frameworks, and this enabled the communist movement to triumph, because it was in a position to overthrow traditional dogmas. It even succeeded in freeing minds and hearts from the sequels of the preceding phase, and enriching militant action with an

integral revolutionary vision and an organization created within the framework of a definitive revolutionary strategy.

Theory, Strategy and Practice

Strategy: Strategy is the general political tenet from which devolves a revolutionary movement aiming at the realization of essential objectives during a specific period in history.

Tactics: These are the political policy which corresponds to a relatively short phase; they trace out the path for the revolutionary movement and establish its direction.

If they are to assume the ideological and historic aspect of their mission —in other words, raise policy to the level of revolutionary action and endow it with a historic mission— political leaders must not base themselves on revolutionary ideology alone, but also on scientific analysis and strategy. They are then in a position to analyse conditions and a given situation objectively and so guarantee the success of an undertaking.

Political strategy is a scientific and practical expression of reality, evolving in the direction which offers the means to concretize revolutionary ideological data, and to furnish a scientific explanation of the evolution of social reality. The ability to control such evolution depends essentially on political strategy. It follows, therefore, that any political strategy of a scientific revolutionary nature must be buttressed by a theory capable of grasping social evolution in its entirety during a specific phase in history. It is, therefore, of capital importance for political strategy to build on a precise ideological foundation; it can then abandon the confused, empirical domain of improvization and rise to the

level of revolutionary, scientific action, taking into account the march of history and the laws governing social evolution. The fact of drawing inspiration from a particular ideology guarantees it from deteriorating into a straight-forward tactical operation, i.e. an adaptation to conditions not yet integrated by ideology. The absence of a link between theory and strategy transforms tactics into strategy — into a kind of chronic illness, resulting from total submission to practical necessity, and preventing a vision of social evolution during a given period of history. Strategy thus finds itself amputated from its ethics and deprived of its fundamental values, reduced to manoeuvres, opportunism and partial solutions[2].

On the other hand, the bond uniting political strategy and revolutionary ideology confers on the revolutionary movement the aptitude to foresee contradictions, i.e. to anticipate events and revise alliances before it is too late. In this way, a revolutionary movement avoids being left on the fringe of events, avoids blunders and formulae tending to abolish its revolutionary character. Political strategy draws from ideology its ability to interpret incomplete phenomena; and its is thanks to ideology that the whole is not sacrificed to the part. Theory is enriched, in turn, by close contact with the evolution of reality in its relation to political strategy. Mutual interdependence and interaction between strategy and ideology constitute a basis on which unity of theory and practice in revolutionary action can stand firm. From strategy they draw an inexhaustible source of riches for the benefit of theory, and a perennial source of discovery for revolutionary thought, and enable the latter to evolve as a result of its permanent contact with every-day reality. They equally enable ideology to follow

2. Cf. Introduction to the Political Report of the XXth National Congress. p. 10

without interruption the general, historic evolution of the Nation and the period. If this interaction, this link between political strategy and ideology is to bear fruit, a third condition is absolutely necessary: a revolutionary organization, combining originality of theory, strategic prudence and wisdom and organic soundness, must exist. This condition fulfilled, the party is in a position to put its theory into practice and control events, to hand on its knowledge to the masses and benefit from their support. The creation of the link between strategy and ideology is, therefore, a vital necessity and a *sine qua non* in the elaboration of an "organizational theory", its structure and essential content drawing inspiration from ideology and its details conforming to political strategy. This binding link can only be consolidated when objective conditions are found to be ripe for large-scale revolutionary action. Then is the time for the transition to the phase characterized by strategic and ideological action to take place. Tactics then adopt a strategy in conformity with the moral and practical values exacted by theory.

The success of liberation experiments of a national and social order in the Third World —which constitute, in the highest sense of the word, the framework of a revolutionary stage— is to be attributed essentially to the link connecting theory, strategy and tactics. Nationalist and socialist movements can only acquire a historic revolutionary character in the Third World if they fill their ideological gap. They will have to crystallize a new revolutionary ideology, capable of forestalling change and explaining important contradictions. Only in this way can they eliminate definitively the dregs of traditional and incomplete revolutionary ideologies, which deal with a single aspect —among so many others— of the problems of nations and proletarian masses, who are the victims of injustice and exploitation in this part of the world.

Chapter II

The General Context of the Birth of Arab Revolutionary Ideology

The Post-War World

The end of the Second World War gave birth to a new world marked by accelerated evolution, touching every sector of political, economic and cultural life. Faced with this new post-War world, thinkers have examined ideological trends which appeared in the 20th century, and attempted to evaluate their importance and their aptitude to clarify the new situation, respond to its requirements and draw indispensable lessons. This current of criticism was the logical end of various attempts to sift out the characteristics of the post-War world and examine the orientations distinguishing this particular phase in the life of humanity.

In the present study we shall try to define the political, economic, social and cultural trends which have modified the post-War world and examine ideological orientations in the world of today; we shall highlight the particular characteristics of this phase and reveal, through the general theoretic context, the framework in which Arabe revolutionary strategy came into being.

Thinkers speak of the advent of new civilizations

which cannot fail to leave their mark on the post-War world—that of the masses, that of specialization, of bureaucracy; they also speak of scientific, industrial and technological revolutions and demographic, industrial and technological revolutions and demographic explosions, hitherto unknown. This is "the world of flux, of change". It is the frequency of these sudden explosions in the various sectors of social life which characterize the post-War world.

After the War, the silence maintained by the different mass movements concerning concrete problems dissipated and gave rise to a movement of considerable dimension. Profound changes took place and relations between the countries of the world gained new life. Even antagonistic organizations abandoned their isolation and the distance separating them dwindled.

To gain an idea of the most important manifestations of these radical changes marking the post-War world, and the crises affecting contemporary ideology, we must direct our attention primarily to the political, economic, social and cultural trends of the period.

Political Trends

In studying world events in the various political contexts which have given rise to yearly change in different countries, we perceive four essential trends:

1. *The Trend of National Patriotic Freedom*

The end of the Second World War corresponds to the end of colonialism. War brought about the fall of the British Empire — or what was left of it. It placed France in a new political universe. Liberation movements which

had been developing in certain Asiatic countries, began to produce positive results. The African continent began its fight for freedom. A new world began to take shape and to become aware of "the illness constituted by colonialism which had to be urgently cured". It is for this reason that national liberation movements continued their struggle after the war. Whole continents abandoned the passive attitude which had kept them on the fringe of international political activity and plunged them into active participation in international life. In 1945 the General Assembly of the United Nations was attended by fifty Member States. In 1960 the number of Member States on the United Nations Committee had risen to one hundred, and to a hundred and twenty-seven in 1970. In this way, fifty countries made their appearance on the international scene during the fifteen years following the end of the war. Parallel to this trend, a new phenomenon, known as neo-colonialism arose. It was an attempt to adapt the instruments of domination over under-developed countries to the new requirements of the political situation.

This state of things gave rise, at the very heart of the patriotic freedom movement, to various trends in the direction of new experiments and attitudes concerning neo-colonialism. Revolutionary trends appeared in these new-born countries, aiming at the transformation of the social and economic condition in a socialistic perspective. Reforming trends also came into being, but contented themselves with perpetuating quasi-colonialistic relations with dominant powers and undertaking changes of a superficial nature, with no radical bearing on a given social condition. Their evolution remained within the framework of a capitalist society.

Fortified by such experience, revolutionary trends began to preoccupy themselves with major problems for revolution, particularly the creation or adoption of a

theory able to serve as a basis for revolutionary action and capable of giving direction to changes and acting as a guide for revolutionaries.

2. *The Trend to Unity and Political Re-grouping*

The post-War period was equally marked by the awakening of movements called upon to complete the task of national liberation by the realization of unity, the strengthening of the Nation's personality and action leading to the re-establishment of historic bonds linking together certain peoples, as in the past, or drawing together the various components of the same people, hitherto dispersed. These trends did not stop at re-establishing already existing links: they set out to create new bonds between peoples from various potentially strategic military zones or those who already constituted an economic community. They are not simply an expression of the ripening of political awareness, but are also a keen awakening to the vital circumstantial requirements of struggle with the enemy and natural evolution.

Thus, apart from the fact that it is a condition of national freedom, Arab unity is a target in conformity with the context in which the objective evolution of the contemporary world takes place.

After the War, the concept of unity compelled recognition and became generally accepted —even by reactionary governments— and this success was crowned in 1945 by the foundation of the Arab League. On paper, military, economic and cultural agreements were signed between 1948 and 1957, without ever reaching concrete form. It was not until 1958 that political unity between Syria and Egypt was at last effected; then, on April 17th 1963, the pact between Syria, Iraq and Egypt,

agreeing to the pursuit of unity, was signed; and finally, after the defeat of June 1967, various attempts were made to find a new formula, capable of preserving unity from the possibility of further disasters.

Then the trend to unity became transformed. It had been marked by uncontrolled reactions and had hitherto been kept a prisoner by its own instinctive attitude, which revealed a deep hereditary inhibition rather than a stand dictated by revolutionary strategy and full awareness of the actual state of things. Particularly after the defeat of June 1967, it affiliated with scientific revolutionary strategy, associating the concept of unity to that of armed combat and according a dominant role to the proletarian masses, the basis, and to the common front uniting progressive patriotic forces on the scale of the Arab Homeland.

After the War, the trend calling for political unity fused with the patriotic movement for freedom. Once liberated from the yoke of foreign domination, countries begin to seek a national or historic framework corresponding to their ideal and which, while consolidating it, give guarantees for long-standing independence. This explains the expansion of the trend towards unity in countries now freed —whether in Asia, Africa or South America— from the fetters of colonialism and its sequels, which have recovered their authenticity and regained awareness of their national personality.

In 1962, the Tunisian weekly "Jeune Afrique" published the result of an opinion-poll carried out by a young Senegalese on a group of 300 African students living in twelve French university towns. Each of them was asked the following question:

"Do you think that, in the future, African countries will remain separate, will reach complete unity or group together in a federation?"

Replies were distributed as follows:

Will remain separate.....	3%
Will group together in a federation.....	34%
Will reach complete unity.....	53%

Unity, the object of so many dreams, began to take concrete form during the first Congress of African States held in April, 1958, at Accra and during the summit Conference of the Organization for African Unity held in Cairo in July 1964. The proclamation of unity between Ghana and Guinea in 1959, the Addis Ababa Conference in 1960 and those of Casablanca, Monrovia and Brazzaville in 1961, and others which followed, all indicate a deep political urge and launch an appeal for the realization of African unity.

In South America this same trend to unity has developed since the War and has been able to surpass the theoretic stage and attain concrete reality. The Rio de Janeiro Conference, which took place between August 15th and September 2nd 1947, (signed at Petropolis on 30th August 1947), gave the movement form in the creation of an inter-American organization. The Bogota Pact, signed in 1948, was ratified by eleven Member States of the Organization of American States; its aim was to draw these countries closer together and defend their cultural affinities. The Conference of Caracas concluded a cultural agreement in 1954. The San Juan Conference, held in 1959, arrived at the elaboration of a programme for unity. Even Europe saw the inception of various trends towards unity after the War. As early as 1945, durgin a visit to Belgium, General de Gaulle underlined the necessity of European unity. A year later, on September 19th, 1946, Winston Churchill stated at a conference given at Zurich University:

"It is our duty to build European unity on the model of the United States of America."

On May 5th 1947, General Marshall took up the same idea when addressing Harvard University.

The foundation of the Council of Europe (which held its first session at Strasbourg on August 10th 1949) and the creation of the Common Market in March 1957 both concretized the idea of European unity. In this way it is evident that the trend towards political and economic unity characterizes the post-War era.

Imperialist attempts —in conformity with international monopolist strategy and neo-colonialism— were nonetheless made to exploit or counter this trend to unity.

3. *Partisan Tendencies to sudden violent Change at the heart of Political Organizations*

After the Second World War a series of major transformations took place in many countries within political organizations. Parallel to the anti-colonialist freedom movement and the trend to political unity, we have witnessed the fall of monarchies and the establishment of republican regimes, the adoption of a constitution by countries which previously had none, and the handing over of power to the Left and to revolutionary elements in countries governed by conservative parties or groups. And other surprises were still in store: military *coups d'Etat,* revolutions in the Third World, radical transformations throughout the world of social and political organizations in ever-increasing number...

On account of its constancy and degree of violence, this situation gave rise to a deep and prolonged state of disquiet, widespread in political life, and attempts have been made as a result to seek out its underlying causes and find measures to recover the balance lost and go forward on sound progressive foundations. Here ideology

decisively intervenes and produces the answers enabling us to remedy confused situations of this kind.

4. *The Division of the World into Political Clans*

In the seventh volume of "L'Histoire Générale des Civilisations" entitled "L'Epoque Contemporaine à la Recherche d'une Civilisation Nouvelle", Michel Crouzet emphasizes the difference between the post-War worlds following the First and Second World Wars. The major difference between the two resides, in his eyes, in the fact that the whole world became divided, after the last War, into two antagonistic clans.

After the Second World War, however, the world passed through two phases, of entirely different consequence. The first was marked by the Cold War between the socialist pro-Soviet bloc and the western pro-American bloc; the second by the pacific co-existence between the two blocs and the appearance on the scene of a third power, China. During the latter phase, the political map of the world was profoundly modified.

From 1945 onwards, signs of change began to take shape. A comparison of the components of the different political clans in the world of 1945, 1960 and 1970, clearly reveals this fact[3].

Number of Member States	1945	1960	1970
Afro-Asiatic countries	13	46	67
Arab countries	5	10	13
South American countries	20	20	24
Commonwealth countries	6	9	26
Socialist countries	3	9	11

3. Cf. Roger Pinto: *International Organizations*, p. 33. Thomas Hoft: *Political Clans in the U.S.A.* The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1970).

On examining the political affinity of each of these groups, we perceive that non-alignment policy is followed by the young countries which attained independence after the War. However, the division of the world into two blocs and the alternating virulence and moderation between the Soviet Union and the United States have somewhat evolved and make the general picture even more complex. Neither the socialist nor the western bloc was spared dissension and internal strife.

The map of the world is no longer static nor easy to follow. International politics appear in varied aspects, with complex and intertwined relations. The wisdom of non-alignment has become a delicate and arduous matter in relation to post-War national liberation experiments; this stand is the political expression of a new revolutionary spirit, based on self-confidence, counting only on its own resources and aware of its responsibility to history. It declines blind conformity and holds to objective criteria, determining the close or estranged relations which govern policies on an international scale, in the light of attitudes adopted by great powers, and of problems on which depend the destiny of independent peoples, who are the victims of injustice, fragmentation and under-development.

Chapter III

Economic, Social and Cultural Trends

Economic Trends

Examination of the international economic situation enables us to define three characteristic trends of the post-War world.

1. *Economic Expansion in Industrialized Countries*

The period following the First World War was marked by a general economic crisis. After the Second World War, on the contrary, figures showed a rise in production and large-scale economic expansion in industrialized countries. The countries which suffered most from the War were rapidly able to recover their balance and attain an output beyond all expection. They doubled production, increased national revenue and found themselves in a position to combat unemployment, which had been a permanent problem during the pre-War era.

We need only compare production figures of 1938 and 1948 to perceive the characteristics of the post-War

world. In "Studies in World Economy" published by the United Nations in 1956, the following table was given:

	Production	
	% 1938	% 1948
U.S.A. and Canada	35	100
Western Europe	107	100
South America	78	100
Asia	104	100

Only six years later, in 1954, these percentages had risen to 117 in the U.S.A. and Canada, 151 in Western Europe, 126 in South America, 125 in Asia and 144 in Africa and the Middle East. This growth indicates the increased economic expansion of the post-War era. The figures, in fact, only concern the expansion of the imperialist countries, which had profited outrageously from the War. Post-War acceleration of scientific and technological progress, stimulated by the War and by competition in all sectors, proved the most important factor in the rapid increase of production. However, only the great Powers were able to make full use of this element and solve their own particular problems at the expense of developing countries.

Unemployment during the pre-War era varied between 20% and 30%; after the War, this percentage fell to around 1% and 5%[4]. In highly-developed countries, the progress indicated by such figures can be placed to the advantage of capitalist societies on account of the close network, based on exploitation, which governed their relations with each other.

4. *Studies in World Economy* published by the United Nations in 1966.

2. *The Trend to "Bureaucratic Aristocracy" Modern Technics*

In a study of post-War civilization, the French sociologist, Jean Fourastié, analysed the structure of the various economic sectors;he divides them into three categories[5]:

a) The first sector, comprising manual workers and those who produce raw materials.

b) The second sector, comprising all industries transforming raw materials into finished products and consumer-goods, i.e. manufacturers and workers.

c) The third sector, covering all activities, with the exception of agriculture and industry: it covers scientists, engineers, specialists, research workers, heads of scientific laboratories, etc.

In his book "La Politique de l'Emploi et de l'Education", Professor Pierre Jaccard describes post-War economic evolution in relation to these three sectors. In his opinion, the trend of evolution is towards the diminution of manual labour to the advantage of the third sector, i.e. administrative occupations playing an increasingly important role. The author evokes one of the consequences of this trend in the U.S.A. Of the six million unemployed unable to find work since 1958, none have the qualifications required by economy's general evolution; being unspecialized, they can find no place in the new trend of industry.

Georges Friedmann and André Siegfried both speak of a new era —that of "bureaucracy"— and there are others who consider world economy to be evolving towards "bureaucratic revolution".

Capitalism is doomed to die. It is now technological

5. *The French Encyclopaedia.* Vol. 20.

progress which orientates society in industrialized countries, whether of capitalist or socialist bent, in a single direction —towards a bureaucratic revolution— with power and wealth concentrated in the hands of specialists and those in charge of economics. Statistics given by Bernheim are worthy of our attention, for they confirm this theory. According to him, indications of bureaucratic revolution (that of heads of industry, in other words) are just as evident in the Soviet Union as in the U.S.A. Only 12% of Soviet citizens share 50% of national revenue, while in the U.S.A. 35% of national revenue is concentrated in the hands of 10% of the population. Bureaucratic evolution automatically reverberates on class-structures, conditions change and reflects in various ideologies and their ability to adapt to the realities of post-War evolution of social life.

3. *The Division of the World into Poor and Rich Countries*

The speed of post-War evolution throughout the world has accentuated the difference between under-developed and advanced countries. In spite of general economic expansion, we must not lose sight of the imbalance reigning in the world. The rapid and considerable increase in population in under-developed countries necessitates a corresponding increase in production, and as a result, the share of each individual diminishes.

In studying the evolution of national revenue in 84 countries, we notice that this is only higher than $750 per annum in 19 countries: Canada and the U.S.A. in North America; New Zealand and Australia in Oceania; 12 Western European countries: Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, France, the British Isles, Luxembourg, Sweden and

Switzerland; one South American country: Venezuela, and finally the Soviet Union. It is to be noted that no African, Asiatic or Middle-Eastern country has a national revenue exceeding $464 a year. Such figures give an indication of the role to be played by the various systems proposing measures to rectify the present world situation and the limitations imposed on contemporary ideologies by hard facts[6].

Following our analysis of the economic and political trends which characterize the post-War world, we shall now examine social and cultural trends.

Social Trends

Sociologists speak of "demographic explosion" and consider it to be one of the most striking and fundamental characteristics of social life today. The United Nations' Report on the social situation of the world reveals the following facts[7]: Between 1950 and 1960, world population rose from 2,500 million to 3,000 million: thus in the space of only ten years, it increased by a figure equal to the entire world population in the middle of the seventeenth century (500 million inhabitants). Demographic evolution throughout the world continued at the same rate during the sixties. Despite the fact that War exterminated 41 million victims, (six million in Germany, five million in Poland, 17 million in the U.S.S.R. and 13 million among the Allies[8]), statis-

6. The above figures correspond to the years 1957-1959. Cf. the author's thesis: *The trend in Educational Reform after the Second World War.* Geneva 1964, p. 137.

7. Cf. United Nation's Report: *The Social Situation of the World,* 1963, p. 3.

8. Cf. *Chronological Table of International Relations,* Paris 1957 p. 165.

tics revealed in 1950 an increase in the population of Europe. Since 1960, moreover, important population increase has taken place in all parts of the world.

Comparison between world population increase, before and after the War, explains sociologists' definition, demographic "explosion". Between 1930 and 1950 the world increase-rate was between 11% and 13%. Between 1950 and 1960 it rose to 19%. On the other hand, the decrease in the mortality rate —particularly in the case of infant mortality— gave rise to a further increase in population between 1960 and 1970.

Demographic explosion is one of the main factors in the extraordinary increase in school attendance, as illustrated by statistics. Parallel to this explosion, social life in the post-War world has undergone lightning changes with a resultant improvement in the general standard of living, increase in salaries, reduction in working hours, improved standards of hygiene, opportunities for promotion, social security allowances, transformation of the social class structure, the rapid and extraordinary change in communications and international exchange, the impact of public opinion, etc.

These rapid social transformations of the post-War world brought about disrupture of the traditional social framework, and overthrew many classical concepts. The masses began to awaken to their own personality, their role as the motor-force of social life and their capacity to modify worn-out structures. They realized that, without a clearly defined method based on high ideals and precise values and a renewal inspired by scientific, revolutionary analysis, action on their part could never surpass the stage of improvization and precipitous, automatic counter-reactions.

Cultural Trends

In an article entitled "La Philosophie face à la Pluralité des Cultures", MacCown defines culture in the following terms[9]:

"Culture can be seen from two points of view; on the one hand, as a heritage, the fruit of historic evolution, and on the other, as a group of traditions honoured by a particular society."

We may say, in the light of this definition, that culture is the meeting-point between a nation's past and present.

During the post-War era, the balance between the three modalities of time —past, present and future— was shattered for many nations. It had for centuries been characterized by a degree of stability and permanence, by slow evolution and constant conditions. In the world today, on the contrary, with its accelerated evolutionary tempo, the sudden changes and unforeseen mutations which are, to the astonishment of all, its hall-mark, the present ceases to be a simple prolongation of the past, as was the case in traditional societies; it becomes, and is, an instantaneous, perpetual state of flux.

The cultural crisis following the Second World War is a result of this. In its temporal dimension, time is submitted to dual pressure from the past and the future. The world is faced with a historic choice (as it was during the Renaissance in Europe, when mighty efforts were made to link Christianity with Classical culture). In the face of scientific progress and the abruptness of political, social and economic events, each country

9. Cf. *The Originality of Cultures*, Paris U.N.E.S.C.O. 1953, p. 11.

strives to link together the past, the present and the future and discover a formula to safeguard historical continuity and preserve it from erosion and attrition.

In the preamble to the U.N.E.S.C.O. Charter, we read: Wars are the work of Man; in consequence, cultural activities must strive towards the creation of a New Man who will be an artisan of peace and a prototype for the post-War world.

It became obvious, after the explosion of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima in August 1945, that another war would bring about the end of the world. Advances in the field of bombs and rockets, gave rise to the reflection that men must either learn to co-exist or they would have to die together. Peace is no longer simply the expression of the balance of power: it has become a necessity, particularly for under-developed nations who are exposed in their struggle against imperialism, to the most lethal and destructive weapons.

Bourgeois culture of the past, the fruit of history's evolution, was a manifestation of the colonial spirit and national fanaticism. Shut away in isolation, it confined itself to living in the past and to its own self-satisfaction. It accepted the idea that war was inherent in human nature. The last war, however, modified this adage, by the new situations it produced. Peace is now seen as an indispensable principle for any culture. This is the fundamental distinction between revolutionary culture, aspiring to the creation of a just and peaceful world, and colonialist culture, which sought only to justify the contradictions existing in the world, and resigned itself to their existence, without a struggle.

Cultures are no longer closed systems. Interpretation and mutual contact between cultures has become a daily commonplace, and the spirit of nationalism, once narrow, rigid and circumscribed, has become humanitarian.

Another trend became evident after the Second World War. The aristocratic concept of culture, prevalent before the War, no longer responded to the needs of post-War mass civilization. Its objective was no longer the formation of an élite; it was no longer an abstract theory, turned in on itself and unrelated to society's requirements. Social and scientific aspects of culture today govern its orientations. Science, knowledge and culture no longer exist outside a politico-social framework. Knowledge for its own sake and for the satisfaction of idle curiosity is now possible for only a few isolated individuals, everdecreasing in number. Cultural trends now hinge on links between society and the individual, concepts and reality, between inherited values and new evolutions, between the national and the international order of things. Culture has become an integral part of socialist revolution and revolutionary experiments in the Third World. Our century is thus revealed as a revolt against all that is rigid and stereotyped, against any form of absolute restriction or of tribal attitude. Life is now synonymous with flux, with perpetual change and modification, with all the elasticity, diversity and width of horizon that this comports and goes far beyond the simple framework in which doctrinal tendencies were enclosed.

In the face of such political, economic, social and cultural trends, all doctrines are destined to go through deep crises. They will be obliged in the first place to resolve the problems of the 19th century, the sequels of which, on account of social stagnation, continued into the 20th century and even up to the eve of War. These doctrines are, paradoxically, based on rapid, unforesseen changes in society which followed on the Second World War, and which, while giving an appearance of being scientific and realistic, in fact give proof of an incomplete vision of social life.

The post-War world is then one of flux, of perpetual evolution. The masses of the Third World are following the movement of history with its specific structure. Doctrines are obliged to adapt to a new state of things and review their theoretical principles from time to time. The 20th Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party, and its resultant changes, the testimony of Togliatti, the leader of the Italian Communist Party, modifications in imperialist policy and the position of the Catholic Church since Pope John XXIII are a all symptomatic of the adaptation of Communism, Capitalism and the Church to a changing world.

The Birth of Arab Revolutionary Ideology

In the general historic context of the trends described above, the revolutionary concept of Arabism came into being. Its crystallization was the result of a group of factors which forged of it a new driving-force for combat.

These factors can be resumed as follows:

1. Currents of thought today, which are, as we have seen, as much the reflection of a new world as they are the fruit of the awakening of the world to contemporary thought.

2. The awakening to crises in contemporary ideologies through internal criteria, founded on the reality of Arab experiences; in other words, a vision inspired by crises affecting movements and trends which are themselves the product of ideologies on an Arab scale.

3. The establishment of a living bond between the Nation's historic past, present problems and future perspectives, i.e. the global apprehension of the dialectical evolution of the Arab reality, perceived in time and in its own territorial boundaries.

4. The feeling of historic responsibility in the face of

the real crises shaking the Arab political world and its combat movements.

These factors enabled the newly-formed Arab revolutionary ideology, at the very moment of its constitution, to give birth to an Arab revolutionary movement, and contributed to the creation fo a strong bond between theory and practice. They endowed Arab thought with a far-seeing, realistic scientific approach and gave it its revolutionary character. They raised it to the level of authentic ideologies, capable of responding decisevely to historical necessity.

The origins of Arab revolutionary ideology are not to be found in abstract research of in pure theoretical analysis. Neither is it the fruit of bureaucratic activity. It took form as a result of profound reflection on the crisis through which the Arab Revolution is passing at this particular moment of history. It goes hand in hand with a desire for deep, radical change of universal importance and of a civilizing nature. Its essence finds expression in the theory of Unity, Freedom and Socialism. Professor Michel 'Aflaq emphasized the importance of this awakening to the particular context of history which gave birth to the contemporary Arab Revolution[10]. It, in fact, saved Arab revolutionary thought from depersonalization —a potential crisis factor— from confusion and from an incomplete view of Arab reality. It spared the Nation unnecessary experiments, endeavours, and errors. In 1950, Michel 'Aflaq, in an article entitled: "The Global Intellectual Movement" stated:

"I believe that our movement has helped us to understand the most crucial problem of Arab life; it can

10. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th,* 2nd Ed; p. 289.

be condensed in the three objectives —Freedom, Socialism and Arab Unity."

The birth of Arab ideology is the fruit of intellectual gestation and militant activity; its crystallization was favoured by the four factors listed below:

1. The national heritage and the historic value of the Arab Nation's militant experience, particulary that of Islam, which concretized in the Arab past, both the deepest spiritual experience and the most radical intellectual, social and political revolution.

2. Contemporary revolutions, which were set in motion by religious reform, and culminated in the Socialist Revolution of 1917. They helped to situate the problem of the oppressed masses and that of divided, persecuted nations and peoples.

3. The new world, born of two great Wars, together with the consequences of a multitude of transformations, touching on every aspect of life, and their relationship to the crucial problems of the future of the human race and to the destiny of the Arab Nation.

4. The contemporary militant experience of the Arab Nation, which is none other than the embodiment of a national awakening, achieved at the expense of struggle against Ottoman domination and Western colonialism. This militant experience was only able to take place because the Arab Nation had re-discovered its vocation and its 'raison d'être', and had come to grips with its own condition —its state of fragmentation, its under-development, its submission to foreign domination, the envy it aroused, the oppression and exploitation of which it is a victim.

The dialectical link between concepts of nationalism, freedom and socialism within the framework of the present Arab experience, is of cardinal importance for

this ideology, and a group of principles have been developed out of it. They can be resumed as follows:

1. The stage of history through which the Arab Nation is now passing is of a profoundly revolutionary and total nature.

2. In any proletarian under-developed, divided nation, under colonialist domination, revolution can only be of nationalist, socialist and liberating character.

3. The objectives of the particular phase in history can be resumed as Unity, Freedom and Socialism.

4. Arab revolutionary strategy is the indication of the resurgence of the Arab Nation; its target is the realization of unity, democracy and socialism at the heart of Arab society.

5. Class-struggle, the fight for national freedom and anti-imperialist combat throughout the world faultlessly blend together from a dialectical point of view.

6. Popular struggle and armed combat are the methods which correspond to the spirit of Arab revolution and guarantee the realization of its objectives.

7. Fidelity to the moral values of contest, and to the higher humanitarian standards required by action of historic impact, is an integral part of revolutionary Arab thought and takes its place at the heart of the movement it has forged.

Evolution in concepts of unity, democracy and socialism, throughout the various stages of Arab revolutionary ideology's growth, enables us to define the bonds which link these principles. According to Professor Michel 'Aflaq, they are "the answer to a Nation's self-questioning when it seeks a clear stand, in accordance with its principles, and endorses the responsibility of its chosen mission"[11].

11. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Historic Role of the Ba'th Movement* 1960, p. 310.

Part Two

Chapter IV

Evolution in the Concept of Nationalism during the Forties

In emphasizing the "nationalist phenomenon", Arab revolutionary ideology grasped an essential truth, in relation to the Arab Nation and our own century —a truth which came near to dealing a fatal blow both to the anti-Nationalist Right and Left.

The anti-Nationalist Left considers Nationalism as belonging to an out-dated era of socialist theory and, in consequence, no longer valid with regard to the exigencies of class-consciousness or humanity's spontaneous urge to achieve freedom. It also analyses the present Arab experience in the light of the failure of similar experiences in the West, so isolating it from its context and deviating, in the name of Marxism, from the dialectical scientific analysis of the Arab reality. It struck a blow at Arab revolutionary thought and at the same time at Marxism and Leninism.

The anti-Nationalist Right, on the other hand, views Arab Nationalism as a new-fangled invention, imported from the West. With the intention of creating a gulf between Nationalism and religion —the deep essence of which they understand nothing— they accuse Nationalists of forgetting the Nation's past and treat them as heretics and renegades, taking no account of the

humanitarian values of the new nationalist socialist concept.

It has devolved on Arab revoltionary ideology to define the importance of the nationalist phenomenon and its humanitarian and secular nature. It is thus a system of thought throwing new light on the real historic context of the current Arab experience and establishing a connection between the Nation's cause and contemporary problems of the world. Arab revolutionary ideology finds it necessary to rectify two deviations:

1. That of the paralysed, retrograde reaction.
2. That of pseudo-progressive elements of the "regionalist" or anti-Nationalist Left. These are of a purely superficial nature and often deny national reality, leave it in the background or even appear to be unaware of the Arab Nation's nationalist struggle.

Arab revolutionary ideology's reply to the deviations of the anti-Nationalist Right and Left, enables it to outstrip them and to avoid falling into the same mistakes. It bases its attitude on two precise points:

a) On the one hand, the idea of continuity and authenticity —the connecting link between national history and present problems.

b) On the other hand, the idea of flux and a breach into the world —the civilizing significance of the present Arab revolutionary movement.

While emphasizing the importance of the link between the Nation's past and present, it accentuates Arab personality and autonomy. It clearly states the need for revolt against the Nation's present condition and takes the future, in both its temporal and historic dimension, fully into consideration. The Nation will in the future be everready to envisage new experiments and keep in touch with other revolutionary activity throughout the world,

and so confirm its international, humanitarian character. While according a primordial role to the Nationalist phenomenon, ideology has attempted to give a new impetus to Arab Nationalism by the following methods:

1. By endowing it with a secular character, respecting all religious and moral values and, at the same time, removing all confessional aspects from its concept.

2. By stripping it of sentimentality and romanticism, and giving it a scientific, realistic, original revolutionary foundation.

3. By liberating it from any racial idea, any form of chauvinism or abstract national socialist theory which is only a servile copy of the classic Marxist model, to be applied mechanically to nationalist experiments today.

4. By bringing nationalism up to date with regard to the specific stage and conditions of life today.

5. By determinating the combat-methods imposed by the current Arab reality with the aim of defining the line of evolution to be followed by the Arab Nation and the world in general.

6. By accentuating the responsibility every Arab citizen is expected to assume in order to rescue the Nation from under-development and division, fight colonialism and exploitation, and also by insisting on the Arab Nation's present mission.

It is in this perspective that documents published during the preparatory period (between 1940-1947) and which contributed to the birth of the Arab revolutionary movement (the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party), forcefully state the following principles:

1. Arab nationalism is a fact. It is the outcome of excesive fragmentation, under-development, exploitation and subjection. This state of things is thoroughly understood by the Arab citizen, who has reached a high level of awareness, is fully participating in his social

vocation and adopting genuine attitudes towards life.

2. Arab Nationalism represents the motor-force of the Arab Nation in its struggle.

3. I gives rise to awareness of the link welding together the Nation's past, present and future and the personality common to all Arabs. In the words of the founder and leader of the Party in 1940, Nationalism is "a living memory", the expression of "love before all else", of "love and sacrifice"; it is a "destiny to which we aspire".

4. Arab Nationalism cannot be understood in the light of 18th, 19th and 20th century experience and concepts in advanced countries, for the following reasons:

a) It is the expression of a new context in history.

b) It is the reflection of theoretical stands adopted by the Arab Nation during the present century.

c) It is the manifestation of the harmony and homogeneity between the Arab Revolution's theory, strategy and tactics, aiming at the resolution of all the contradictions which would otherwise lead the Arab citizen and the Arab masses to disaster.

Chapter V

The Revolutionary Concept of Arab Unity

In the light of the previous facts, Arab Nationalism appears in the new framework of revolutionary ideology in two different aspects; on the one hand, as a total realization of the present Arab experiment's importance, i.e. its link with its own past, common problems of the present and future perspectives, with, in addition, harmonized concepts of Unity, Freedom and Socialism, and on the other hand, a practical stand, faithful to the fight to bring these objectives into being.

Abstract theoretical analysis, taking no account of the obvious factors of the specific Arab reality, can, as a result, in no way assist us to understand the meaning of Arab Nationalism. Neither can it be understood by reference to already-existing prototypes, which tend to express a different historic context and reflect the fundamentals of a different kind of society, other times, other regions of the world, and local and international conditions of a different order.

It can, in the words of Professor Michel 'Aflaq, be said to be: *"A living experience, incapable of being understood by reason alone"*.

1. It is not an abstract theory; neither is it a philosophy, but rather the theoretical and practical expression of the movement of Arab contemporary history. It faithfully conveys the Arab Nation's needs and aspirations for unity, its revolt against fragmentation and all the factors contributing to its perpetuation. Arab nationalism can only be understood in the light of an analysis of the Arab condition and its intrinsic contradictions, and by increased awareness of the living, historic bond linking together the past, the present and the future; we must perceive the thread running through the particular evolution of the Arab reality, through the resolution of its inherent contradictions and the general evolution of common experience in the Third World as a whole. In other words, the content of Arab Nationalism can only be understood through a scientific, analytical examination enabling us to grasp the historic phase in its entirety and draw the necessary conclusions. It is only through a revolutionary stand, encouraging the struggle for radical change in the present situation, that this can take place. Arab society will then continue to evolve on healthy foundations.

2. Abstract theory, omitting to take the above elements into account, could only fall into error: it deviated on account of an incorrect view of Nationalism. It makes a confusion between "Nationalism" and "nationalist theory", indicating an experience already undergone, whilst Arab Nationalism is an experience in the making. Concept and experience of Arab Nationalism are complementary; they co-exist, they are interdependent and provide each other with mutual inspiration, because the concept of Nationalism belongs to the dialectical system constituted by this current experience. Thus, to fully understand the present historic movement of the Arab Nation, we can no longer content ourselves with adapta-

tions of nationalistic theories, drawing their inspiration from previous events. Examination and formal analysis of Nationalism and its various aspects close themselves off in the restricted framework of verbal definitions and controversies. This formal method is held prisoner to abstract dialectics, and is able to offer only a superficial and incomplete idea of Arab reality, for it forgets the dialectical movement which is its essence. Arab Nationalism is a movement of strife. The Arab nationalist is a man fighting for the unity and freedom of the Arab Nation and for the establishment of socialism. Only struggle on the dual plane of theory and practice offers us the means to fathom living experience and draw the necessary conclusions[12].

3. Fragmentation and under-development, class-exploitation and colonialism ineluctibly confer on Arab Nationalism and its combat-methods a revolutionary character; it thus refuses all partial reform and all superficial solutions, both those which are resigned to them. The enemies of Unity, Freedom and Socialism are well represented by an imperialist system, a Zionist movement and a well-established Reaction, and their interests are in flagrant contradiction with the line of action of the Arab movement in its struggle. Contrary to the pattern in advanced countries, the under-developed live in a state of perpetual crisis, because their inherent contradictions have reached a point of culmination, no longer acceptable either from the point of view of logic or of morality. They cannot, for this reason, envisage solutions of partial reform.

In advanced Western societies realization of progress does not necessarily imply upheaval, but, for the Arab

12. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th,* 1943; "La Pensée Abstraite", p. 139, 4th Ed.

Nation in its present stage, progressive reform would be a total anomaly, a sickness leading to disaster. Our needs are such that upheaval is the only solution and must stand as an integral part of our ideology. It is the only remedy capable of jugulating disease. It is a measure aiming at the radical, violent transformation of the ailing body; only a new condition will enable the body to throw off illness once and for all[13].

4. Arab Nationalism is, on the one hand, a national "freedom" movement, fighting a deadly battle against colonialism. It is, on the other hand, a humanitarian trend, in that it has chosen to join with freedom experiments all the world over. It opposes colonialism and its inherent defects —fanaticism, tyranny and oppression.

Arabs hunger for national restructuring, for the unification of the various Regions, and for freedom from foreign domination. Their nationalism has nothing to do with fanaticism and cannot tolerate oppression. A race which has known injustice, fragmentation and foreign domination can accept neither tyranny nor violation of the rights of others, unless such suferring were of great importance in the preparation for the most arduous of struggles[14].

5. Arab Nationalism is a progressive trend. Its chosen objective is to rescue the Arabs from under-development and avoid its hampering consequences in their forward march towards progress.

The greatest service Arabs can render humanity is to raise nationalism to a higher level. It is their duty to annihilate all forces opposed to progress by combating

13. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Duty of Nationalist Action.* 1944, p. 78.
14. Id; *Ibid.* "The Arab Mission", 1946 p. 139-145.

colonialism and exploitation and creating propitious conditions for the improvement of human life[15].

These principles, which were our gide during the first stage of the evolution of nationalist thought in the framework of Arab revolutionary ideology, saw the parallel rise of the Arab revolutionary movement on a practical level; being animated by the same principles, it improved combat-methods. Between 1940 - 1947 the movement distinguished itself by a number of stands and watchwords which enabled Arab revolutionary ideology to make the transition from theory to strategy and practical action, and define the new direction to be followed henceforward by combat.

In 1941, the movement which was then called "The Movement of Arab Resurgence", organized a supporting campaign at Damascus for the Rashid 'Ali Al-Kaylāni's revolution in Iraq, in which it participated.

In 1945 it mobilized rising revolutionary forces to oppose the decision of the Republican Party of the United States and Roosevelt's declaration, authorizing the emigration of American Jews to Palestine.

During the same period, it made severe criticism of the Charter of the Arab League, and denounced the organization for inefficiency.

In 1946, it took the lead in manifestations of support for Egypt in its struggle for independance and the withdrawal of British troops. It protested against the pact between Jordan and Great Britain and called on Arabs to launch once more their fight in Palestine. It also protested against the French Government's crimes in Morocco[16].

All this represented a concretization of the nationalist concept and nationalist strategy, associating the struggle

15. Id; *Ibid,* 1946 p. 139-145.
16. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Vol. 1.

for freedom with nationalist combat, and establishing a direct internal link between the two. In this way, the concrete struggle of the Arab revolutionary movement acquired a global character of national impact, enabling it to reveal itself as a truly national movement and to expand throughout the entire Arab Homeland. Arab revolutionary ideology thus, from the very beginning, took on, apart from its theoretic principles, considerable political and organizational importance. It watched over the creation of the Arab revolutionary movement. Since 1943, when the Ba'th announced its noble, nationalist motto:

"A single arab nation with an eternal mission."

It declared its faith in the Arab revolutionary movement and its adherence to it, nationalist principles have evolved as follows:

1. The Arab cause is one and indivisible.
2. Total Arab unity is the aim of Arab struggle.
3. For each and every Arab Region, real independence is that which leads towards national unity.
4. Any stand in favour of unity requires that the cause of the Arab Nation be considered one and indivisible. Any solution to regional problems must take into account the common interest of the Arab Nation in its entirety.
5. Organization on a national scale is the essential condition which will enable the unitarian struggle to reach its objective.

Towards the end of the forties (to be precise on April 7th 1947), the Arab revolutionary movement adopted the name of "The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party". A new era began, during which theoretical, political, economic and social principles were defined. Arab revolutionary ideology crystallized around the theory "Unity, Freedom and

Socialism" and in 1948, the Arab Ba'th Party declared in its Constitution its basic principles:

Essential principles

First Principle: The Unity and Freedom of the Arab Nation

Arabs make up a single Nation. It is their natural right to live in a country common to all and to chosse their destiny freely. In consequence, the Arab Ba'th believes that:

1. The Arab Homeland constitutes an indivisible political and economic entity. No Arab Region can postulate that, by isolating itself from others, it can achieve improvement of living conditions.
2. The Arab Nation is a cultural entity. Any particularity dividing its sons is, in fact, a false obstacle and a factor in the awakening of Arab awareness.
3. The Arab Homeland belongs to Arabs. It is for them, and them alone, to determine their way, to command their riches and choose their destiny.

Second Principle: The Personality of the Arab Nation

The Arab Nation has the merit of being the lone artisan of its resurgence, which is one of perpetual evolution. It is noteworthy for its versatility, its creativity, its fertility of mind, its capacity for renewal and rebirth. The rhythm of its resurgence is permanently linked to the evolution of personal liberty, and reconciles the full development of the individual with the interest of the Nation. The Arab Ba'th thus believes that:

1. Freedom of expression, the right of public meeting, freedom of conscience and artistic liberty are sacred. No power has the right to violate them.

2. All citizens must have the benefit of equal opportunity; their value depends apart from all other considerations, on their efforts towards the prosperity and the forging of the Arab Nation.

Third Principle: The Arab Nation's Mission

The Arab Nation is entrusted with an eternal mission. This has become apparent throughout the successive stages of its history in ever-new, and complementary aspects.

It aspires to the renewal of human values, makes all possible attempts to stimulate the progress of Man, to favour understanding and co-operation between nations. It is for these reasons that the Arab Ba'th considers that:

1. Colonialism, and all other manoeuvres leading to the same end, are criminal acts, to be opposed by Arabs with every means at their disposal. They intend to support in the full measure of their material and moral potential, all races fighting for freedom.

2. The interest of humanity is universal. All values and all civilizations have similar objectives. Arabs draw their nourishment from the common source of world civilization and contribute to it in their turn. They stretch out their hand to other nations in a gesture of brotherhood and co-operate with them in the creation of lawful systems guaranteeing to all races fulfilment, peace, nobility of heart and moral values.

General Principles

Article 1

The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party is of national dimension; it has sub-divisions in every Arab Region. It takes an interest in regional politics only in the measure that they serve the supreme interests of the Arab Nation.

Article 3

The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party is a national movement, convinced of the living, permanent reality of nationalism. Nationalist feeling, born from awareness of the close link between the Nation and the individual, is an object for deep respect, and is animated by prodigious strength. It prompts to sacrifice and encourages in a man both a sense of responsibility and the humanitarian urge to put his convictions into practice.

Article 6

The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party is one of upheaval. It is convinced that only upheaval and strife will enable it to reach its cardinal aims —the resurgence of the Arab Nation and the establishment of socialism. It is fully aware that any form of slow evolution and any manner of incomplete or superficial reform constitutes a danger liable to prevent the realization of its objectives and lead it infallibly to its doom. It is for this reason that it has taken the decision to:

a) Fight foreign colonization, in order that the Arab Nation may attain absolute, total freedom.

b) Fight to unite and re-group all Arabs in an independant state.

c) Insurge against the present state of degradation and overthrow every aspect of intellectual, economic, social and cultural life.

Article 7

The Arab Homeland is the part of the earth occupied by the Arab Nation. Its natural frontiers are delimited by the Taurus Mountains, the plateau of Iran, the Gulf of Basra, the Sea of Oman, the Mountains of Ethiopa, the Sahara Desert, the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean.

Article 8

Arabic is the official State language for the wording of texts, for education and for the use of citizens of the State.

Article 9

The flag of the Arab countries is that of the Arab Revolution, which broke out in 1916, the objectives of which were the liberation and unification of the Arab Nation.

Article 10

An Arab citizen is a man who speaks Arabic, has lived on Arab territory, desires to go on living there and believes himself to be a part of the Arab Nation.

The above principles, which gave rise to the first Constitution, sprang for the most part, from nationalism. Its various national components constitute a united group, working for its own good, i.e. for the well-being of humanity, as seen through the values of present-day civilization. This vision of things takes form through the creation of true systems guaranteeing sovereignty, justice, well-being, peace and higher morality for all peoples.

All that is said above provides us with the elements enabling us to gauge the present Arab condition as an

abnormal and inhuman situation, and one which we refuse. We affirm the Arab right to constitute a Nation, a single State, and to establish a free, advanced system, capable of rendering to the Arab Nation its ability to serve humanity and contribute to its progress.

This vision of things, which stems from the Nation's confidence in its own potential and in its ability to add to the flourishing of humanity, is in full agreement with the categorical refusal of colonialism on both a national and a world-wide scale. Colonialism is a crime and Arabs are fighting it with all the means at their disposal.

According to the principles laid down by the Constitution, nationalism is a civilizing act of revolution. It is in total contradiction with the divided state of the Nation, opposed to foreign domination, to the presence of colonialism and all external authority. On the basis of these principles, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party decided to launch an attack on fragmentation, colonialism and Zionism.

Towards the late forties, the Palestinian problem became the focus of events. The Party was the first to brandish the slogan of armed combat, which it had succeeded in transforming into a popular, militant concept and later into a revolutionary method. The Party's participation in the battles of 1948 and in revolutionary logic, denouncing the political comedy played by various Arab governments at the time, decisively revealed reactions to the Zionist-Colonialist project which had previously been prepared. The Party's declarations testified to its numerous pledges in favour of struggle. The titles of its articles demonstrate its stand and the decisive revolutionary perspectives it proposed[17]:

17. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Ba'th's Struggle*. Vol. 1. 2nd Ed. p. 227-243.

"The knell has tolled. Palestine can only be saved by fire and the sword."

"Let us save Palestine and mobilize the masses."

"Palestine, as a result of the partition, is threatened on all sides."

"The Arab people will not stop at refusal of the principle of partition. It is decided to rid Palestine of Zionism for ever."

"Arabs must master the situation before colonialism intervenes and before it is too late."

"Let us take occupation of Palestine as our objective. Altercations cannot safeguard us from an ever increasing menace."

Towards the end of the forties, progress was seen on two fronts, the strategic and the organizational. The concept of unity began to gain ground and its theory began to take shape through the steadfastness of its strategy's general lines, its initial stands and the means to be employed to bring about unity. Precise proposals were already able to give satisfactory answers to the following questions:

1st Question

How can we begin our march towards unity?

Reply

By mutual struggle against colonialism on the scale of the Arab Homeland in its entirety.

2nd Question

What will be found at the end of the road?

Reply

The creation of a single, independent Arab State.

3rd Question

What will be the instrument of the struggle towards unity?

Reply

Unitarian organization on the scale of the Arab Homeland.

4th Question

What conditions must be fulfilled by such an organization?

Reply

It must fulfil the conditions which will enable the creation of the society for which we are fighting.

Articles published by the Party at the time accentuated the factor capable of responding to essential requirements, born from and objective view of underdevelopment, and the divided state of the Arab Nation. In this connection, Comrade Michel 'Aflaq, the founder of the Party, asked:

"What is the essential difference between the Party role in a Nation such as ours, living in a condition such as our own, and the role of the same Party in other nations, living in totally different conditions? What should be the true face of the Party our Nation requires?"

He gives the following reply:

"In a country enjoying a healthy, normal situation, only the faulty exercise of government can come under accusation. It is usual for various parties to come into being and prepare public opinion over a certain period of time and convince it of their correct attitude, with the result that any given party, once in power, is in a

position to rectify errors of government in the various sectors. The present condition of the Arab Nation is, on the contrary, the result of deep perturbation and a disorganization of the Nation's life. It is, therefore, the duty and the mission of any party seeking to gain our confidence and respond to the vital needs of our country, to apply the same remedies to the Nation that it would apply to the State. The Party must be a true image of the Nation to which we aspire. The real, living party, ready today to transmit a message to the Arab Nation is that which aims at the creation or the resurgence of a nation. Such a party must, however, give first priority to these conditions. In other words, both the party and its members must in their methods be imbued with the same moral qualities they desire to insufflate into society of the future: and the means they use to achieve their objectives, must correspond to these criteria. It must, in one word, be the party of upheaval. It must prepare its militants and show proof of its fidelity to the idea of upheaval, not only in its aims, its programmes, its means, methods and organization on paper, but in its approach, in its heart and its new morality."[18]

Nationalist theory of unity followed the same evolution on an organizational plane as on that of strategy, giving the Party its true significance and defining both its nature and its role. On July 2nd 1947, in a statement to the Homs sector in Syria, Comrade 'Aflaq affirmed:

"More than all others, the Ba'th is an Arab Party. It does not stop at recognizing Arab thought, but conjugates all its efforts to be an Arab Party of national importance, covering every Region and providing adequate solutions to Arab problems, which are an indi-

18. *Following the Ba'th*, p. 153-158; article headed. *The Party of Upheaval*, 1949.

visible whole. It takes and interest in regional problems only in the measure that they reflect Arab national interest."[19]

The reproach which can be made with regard to the Arab revolutionary ideology's evolution during the period in question, is that it failed to put into practice organizational theory, independently of the regional state of things. It was already the end of the forties before the movement acquired full control of its national organization. In fact the notion of organized national leadership only came into being in the middle of the fifties. This could be attributed to the fact that the Arab revolutionary movement had, during the period of its constitution, concentrated its attention on ideology rather than on strategic and organizational aspects. It gave particular attention to endowing new revolutionary action with a healthier attitude. In this sense, they made no mistake, for it was this preparatory, theoretical phase which gave the Arab revolutionary movement its full impact. It might well have taken even longer. This theoretical stage could, nevertheless, have found a complement from the very beginning, in a system of national organization.

19. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Vol. 1. p. 159-160.

Part Three

Chapter VI

The Strategic Plan Towards Unity during the Fifties

Nationalist thought entered a new era with the fifties. Arab revolutionary action thenceforward went beyond the stage of elaborating a strategic framework and began to envisage the strategic plan for the achievement of unity.

Nationalist thought began to take form as a result of concrete realizations, aiming at the unification of two or more Arab Regions. These realizations, which were inaugurated in 1950 by a project for the union of Syria and Iraq, and crowned by the project for the federation of Syria and Egypt in 1958, decisively influenced the political strategy of different parties whether progressive or reactionary— and also the position of the different Arab governments. The realization of unity became the central axis around which the movement's policy revolved during the fifties. This is the period we now intend to examine.

As we follow the stages in the evolution of nationalist thought in the framework of Arab revolutionary ideology during this period, we note the following facts:

1. In 1950 Arab revolutionary ideology had to reply to the cardinal question: What strategy is to be employed to achieve unity? There was no longer any question of

offering purely theoretical answers, destined to fill a gap and imposed by fierce discussions and ideological combats between "nationalist non-socialist" movements, between "socialist anti-nationalist" trends and the new Arab revolutionary "nationalist-socialist" current of thought. The question assumed, on the contrary, a practical aspect, relating to real situations in which unity could be achieved.

2. In a series of articles on the concept of inquilâb* ("Upheaval")[20], and "National Resurgence"[21], Professor Michel 'Aflaq defined the cardinal strategic perspectives of the Arab struggle of the time.

These should draw their inspiration from the following principles:

a) Combat is a suitable means for the creation of an instrument for the achievement of unity.

"How can a united Nation be built except by ferocious, arduous, exhausting struggle, constraining every member of the Arab Nation to plunge deep down within himself and rediscover it in toil and suffering?"

b) In this particular phase, struggle is, at one and the same time, an action-method and an aim to be achieved.

"Strife is the practical expression of the theory of

* Inqilâb is an Arab word of great significance, often repeated in the Ba'th political vocabulary and the language of its founder. It is one of the most forceful ideas of the Ba'th ideology and is derived from the Arab word "Qalaba" —to overthrow or overturn something— and in everyday political terms, designates the overthrowal of a given situation or set-up. It implies a far-reaching multidimensional phenomenon which should ideally give rise to the total resurgence of Arab civilization.

20. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th,* 3rd Ed. p. 159-185.

21. Id. *Ibid.:* p. 288-298.

'upheaval', which is in no way limited to ideological struggle. For the Arab citizen, it is not simply an action-method, but an end in itself. Out of strife, and strife alone, Arabs will retrieve their sense of real life and the unity of the Arab Nation."

c) Only struggle, going beyond present contradictions, can enable the realization of unity.

"How can we make the transition from a given state of things to its diametrical opposite if we limit ourselves to transforming only the outward aspect of things, without changing their hearts and essence? We cannot reach the deep nature of things without accepting suffering, division from within at the very heart of the Nation, and without accepting the violence of war; these trials are in no way comparable to those endured in a war declared on the most ferocious of enemies[22]. Upheaval finds in strife its true significance, its only real significance; it is a struggle dividing the Nation into two camps —that of immobility, of opportunism, defending its own personal interests in opposition to the holders of the new theory, who are waging a battle against the decadent state of the Nation. The Ba'th is the straightforward product of this battle". [23]

d) Revolution is the only road that leads ineluctibly to unity:

"Upheaval is thus the only road that leads to the aim and to the new society we wish to build. There is no question of one means among many others; it is the only one... We are fighting lies and corruption on the

22. Id. *Ibid.: The Arab Ba'th Stands for inqilâb (Upheaval)*, p. 160.

23. Id. *Ibid.:* "Arabism and the Movement Fighting for inqilâb", p. 173-174.

political and social scene, not only with a view to end all this and transform the situation, but also to enable the Nation to recover its unity in struggle."

e) The realization of Arab unity and of upheaval guarantees the elaboration of an organization faithful to the spirit of upheaval.

"The upheaval to which Arabs aspire offers us the means to create an adequate instrument, of both genuine and efficient nature, enabling us to realize our national aims in a spirit in tune with its requirements."

f) True unity will never see the dawn without the struggle for liberty and socialism, which give it its full significance.

"For Arabs, unity is the Law and the supreme objective. For it to become possible, for the road which leads there to be sound, for the tree to bear fruit, the Arab people must make yet another step towards liberty and socialism[24]."

g) Popular struggle is the adequate, efficient means to ensure the realization of national objectives[25].

h) From an organizational point of view, the Arab Ba'th Movement has not yet reached a satisfactory stage, worthy of its mission and capable of attaining its national objectives[26].

"The Arab Ba'th Movement has so far rendered two great services to the Arab cause. The first was the

24. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Vol. II p. 34.
25. Id. *Ibid,* Vol. II p. 38.
26. *Following the Ba'th:* "The Organization of the Movement Fighting for inqilâb". 1950, 4th Ed. p. 71.

definition, conciliation and harmonization of the Arab Nation's aims. The second was the tracing of the true path which would ensure the realization of those aims. There is, however, an even more important task than either of these —the creation of an efficient, genuine, satisfactory instrument enabling us to attain our aims in a spirit in conformity with the exigencies of upheaval. We can say that until today the Arab Ba'th's action has confined itself to orientation —the creation of an intellectual, psychological climate and predisposition, favourable to the idea of radical change. Among the members of the well-organized Arab Ba'th Movement, mutual confidence reigns;they ardently believe in its action and will not fail to prove their worth."

3. En 1950 the watchword calling for unity between Syria and Iraq made its appearance, and obtained the adhesion of two opposing factions. The first of these envisaged only a superficial form of unity, safeguarding the interests of the class in power. The second made use of mass-logic and revolutionary criteria. The enthusiasm aroused by this appeal in reactionary bourgeois parties, gave "petit-bourgeois" parties of a progressive regionalist character an opportunity of —and a justification for— refusing the watchword and for attacking it, and using it as a slogan to serve the interests of the royal family and that of British colonialism; the latter imposed its domination on Iraq in pursuance of a treaty guaranteed by the presence of British military detachments stationed in the provinces of Habanyya and Cha'iba. It thus became the proletarian revolutionary movement's duty to take up a stand with regard to the appeal, in order to overtake progressive trends hostile to unity and opposed to its spirit and realization. It found itself compelled, moreover, to denounce the favourable attitudes towards unity adopted by a certain type of

bourgeoisie, with the intention simply of increasing its own "living-room", exploiting the feudal class and making use of the powerful, reactionary bourgeoisie and the domination of British colonialism. In this way a new impetus would be given to the reactionary royal regime.

The Party's declaration, published in No. 346 of the Ba'th newspaper on January 9th, 1950, states the strategy of the approach to unity, the theoretic principles of which had been laid down in Professor 'Aflaq's writings. It is a highly important document with regard to the evolution of the Arab revolutionary movement's national concept of unity. It defines the conditions to be fulfilled in any work towards unity within the Arab revolutionary movement and, at the same time, denounces errors of the Right (favourable to unity) and of the Left (hostile to its realization), together with the dangers of both attitudes. It lays down the theoretical and practical action-methods which guarantee freedom and progress for nationalists fighting for unity.

The definition of these conditions arises out of a global analysis of the Arab Nation's situation since the Palestine disaster of 1948, and an examination of the conditions peculiar to the two countries in question (Syria and Iraq). The Party's declaration accentuated the following points:

a) For Arabs, unity is a law and a supreme objective.

b) The way to unity can only be sound if the Arab people make a further step towards freedom and socialism.

c) The war with Palestine revealed to the Arabs that the feudal, reactionary nature of their under-developed social system was the fundamental cause of their defeat.

d) The retrograde, reactionary feudal class is lagging behind the movement towards unity because it creates and accentuates division to further its own interests.

e) The establishment of a republican regime is a vital

matter for the Arabs in their present condition. Its consolidation by unification is a necessity if it is to be preserved from deformation and falsification, and if its weaknesses are to be resolved.

f) The Arab people, as a result of the Palestine disaster and the failure of the Arab League, aspires to the creation of a federation between Syria and Iraq; but foreign intervention and the dominant classes aim at the execution of a reactionary colonialist project.

g) The Arab Ba'th is opposed to any union which would represent a menace to Syrian independence, to the republic or to this country's freedom. It calls upon committees of popular strife to fight for sound unity, capable of creating favourable conditions for its own expansion and elaboration.

h) The federation of Syria and Iraq is now a fact, and constitutes the first step towards Arab unity. It must, however, offer the following guarantees:

1. Nationalism and Freedom.

a) It must never become the instrument of political, economic or military domination in the service of the interests of any foreign power.

b) The treaty with Great Britain must be modified in such a way as to allow Iraq to achieve total independence.

c) Cooperation in the miitary field must in no way threaten either the autonomy or the security of the Syrian Army.

2. It must be progressive, in that;

a) The destiny of unity must not fall into the hands of reactionary or feudal classes.

b) The republican regime must continue to follow its progressive socialist orientation without fail and in a definitive way.

The importante of this statement, which takes its place as a historic document, requires the full reproduction of its text:

The Ba'th's Reflections on the Problem of Unity with Iraq

"Unity and the Republic are the two cornerstones of Arab freedom. All committees for popular struggle should brandish this slogan in order that the union of Syria and Iraq may be placed at the service of the people.[27]"

Under this title, the Ba'th published the following historic declaration:

"The Arab Ba'th has given the contemporary Arab movement its true theoretical and practical form by defining its objectives: freedom, socialism and unity. For the Arab people, unity is the Law and the supreme objective. It is, however, indispensable, in order for this to take place, for the way to be sound and for success to be achieved, that the Arab people make yet a further step towards freedom and socialism. The war with Palestine has opened Arab eyes to the principal defects undermining their society. They have realized that plots hatched by foreign governments and their own lack of preparation for war were not the only causes of defeat. This was, in fact, essentially due to the retrograde structures of their feudal, reactionary society. They have realized, moreover, that social structure has been the major obstacle to unity. The very nature of the feudal class-system is based on conflict between personal interests opposing the families and clans in power. These, better to exploit and subjugate the people, make use of

27. *The Ba'th Newspaper.* No. 346.

clan-weakness and their submission to colonialism, with which they find themselves obliged to collaborate..."

None of this, however, explains away fragmentation. This is the most decisive factor, for it permits the maintenance of the decrepit feudal system and favours the perpetual interventions and conspiracies of colonialism. If the unity to which the Arab people aspire is to be protected from colonialism and feudalism —the two calamities which threaten its existence— it is certain that it cannot take place from one day to another or even in the immediate future. Unity must be attained gradually. Arabs must, in practice, go forward at a reasonable pace and accustom themselves to the idea as far as possible. They must respect the conditions assured by the appropriateness of the popular progressive path, which will surely lead them to their aim. They must always bear in mind that these steps are only a small beginning, but one which can enable them to extend the struggle, realize total unity and rectify the way.

Unity and the Republic

The confusion reigning in popular Arab circles concerning the two fundamental principles of Arab life today —unity and the republic— and rumours concerning eventual disagreements and contradictions are, in fact, simply the outcome of intellectual obscurantism and lack of knowledge, which are alone responsible for the apparent incompatibility of two principles which are destined to co-exist and to complete each other. The republic does not represent for Arabs another form of power. It organizes society life in all its aspects, representing above all the symbol of freedom in its widest sense: individual freedom, freedom in general —the right of the people to exercise power and guide the affairs of State in full sovereignty; and it signifies, most

particularly, genuine equality of rights for every citizen, the abolition of exploitation of Man by Man and class exploitation in the field of economics. To be absolutely clear, the republic is synonymous with all forms of freedom, not only because it pre-supposes obligatorily the realization of progressive, socialist aims, but also because of its greater adaptability and its ability to bring them into effect. In present conditions, this is a vital matter for the Arabs. If Arabs are to be faifhful to the value they attribute to the Republic, and its place in their lives, it is their bounden duty to preserve it from deformation and falsification. It must be consolidated by unity, by drawing the Arabs ever closer to each other. The establishment of a liberal regime in a small, isolated country does not enable it to flourish, to stand firm or to use its potential to the full. Solitude and fragility expose it to reactionary forces and colonialist enemies, both within and without, and it becomes a soul-less wraith, incapable of production.

Colonialism and its henchmen have tried to make the most of the apparent incompatibility between unity and the republic. They have not failed to exaggerate the facts, and have created confusion in peoples' minds about the uncertain outcome of a task of such national magnitude. They have given to colonialist interests a patriotic and nationalist flavour in order to divide the Arabs and rear them up against each other, so creating apparent discord over nationalist aims. This form of sport, however, hides in fact colonialist enemy interests and designs. The Ba'th is, therefore, convinced that its most sacred duty is to denounce these projects in the light of its principles and delineate the true, positive path which it is the people's obligation to trace out for themselves, if they are to fox colonialist conspiracies and continue progress and the march towards unity, freedom and socialism.

Union and Isolationism

In Syria, as elsewhere, people laid great hopes on the Arab League, but little by little hope dwindled until the time of the Palestine disaster. From then on, they began to think in more realistic terms, of more realizable projects, such as union with another Arab country, a neighbouring land with similar characteristics, like Iraq. However, foreign schemers and the clans in power, aided by their henchmen, made up of professional politicians, opportunists and mercenaries, found an opportunity in both countries to carry out a specific project to ensure British colonialism's continued hold on Syria and enable the feudal class to expand its power and increase its exploitation. And in adition to all this, the republican regime was to be sacrificed, with all its potentialities and all its guarantees —the one regime able to offer the majority of the Arab people the means of political, social and economic freedom...

This situation forced enlightened national groups, who were faithful to the path of national unity and were maintaining a sound direction (with its certain outcome) to deepen their attitude and oppose any formal union likely to threaten Syria's independence, its republic and the evolution of its structures towards a relative form of freedom —a solution which would entail no real improvement and ensure neither the consolidation of union between the two countries nor assure the prosperity of its people. Union, in the eyes of these groups, would be incapable of responding to the national will, of avoiding for the Nation the danger of a new form of foreign colonization or of reaction in political and social life, unless committees for popular struggle rallied to their watchword in both the countries concerned. Union could not take place unless these committees enforced conditions previous to its realization and traced out the line to

be followed. It was for them to draw from popular strife, with the pressure it was capable of exerting, the necessary force to impose union.

There is a considerable difference between the above attitude, arising out of sound nationalist thought and the motives which animate most of these professional politicians and mercenaries who, with the pretext of defending republican independence, do everything in their power to prevent union from taking place. It is, in fact, an open secret that foreign states, with colonialist aims, are opposed to union, because they see in it an obstacle to renewed domination of Syria and the execution of their plans. Whatever the conditions involved, union is for them a means to fortify the Arab position. It would be a direct threat to certain countries such as Israel, and an indirect menace to others, such as France and the United States of America, who fear the domination of their British rival. They also fear that union may prevent them from putting their plans into execution, for colonialist countries are fully aware that the vitality of the Arab people confers on them the means to transform any union into a decisive step towards total union and, with time, into an ever-increasing force, capable of perpetual adaptation to circumstance and to the progressive structures to which the entire Arab people aspire.

In a similar manner, and following the example of many Syrian politicians — who abandoned their principles and adopted colonialist views, thereby opposing union, in order to gain ministerial posts and ensure their personal interests —several Arab governments and royal families sacrificed the supreme interest of the Nation to their own self-interest and struggle for power. They rival with foreign states in maintaining the present situation in Syria, with all its inherent dangers.

The Party's Stand

The Ba'th states its position concerning the above trends in accordance with the following principles:

1. The Ba'th's aim is the realization of total unity under the aegis of a progressive socialist programme.
2. Any union susceptible to realization in such conditions should represent a decisive step – a promise of the final aim.
3. Popular strife is the right path and offers the maximum guarantees for the realization of the national objective.

The first steps to be taken will alter the course of events. If they follow the correct path, they will lead to expansion and reinforcement. If they are erroneous, they run the risk of leading to retrenchment and extinction.

In view of propitious geographic, social and national conditions, on the one hand, and the national requirements imposed by the dangerous proximity of the Zionist state, on the other, the Party considers the union of Syria and Iraq as a first step towards Arab unity. It also considers that, in order to take the step which will give results in the present circumstances, we require two guarantees.

The first is nationalism. The people need have no fear. Union will in no way lose control of its destiny on the political, economic and military plane, and will never allow it to fall into the hands of a foreign power. The Party exacts the revision of the Treaty between Great Britain and Iraq in order that the latter shall acquire full independence. Moreover, the terms of this treaty should be limited to Iraq only and in no way concern Syria. Military co-operation should endanger neither the independence nor the security of the Syrian Army.

The second is progressivism. The people need have

no fear. Union will not provide an opportunity for their exploitation of their submission to the domination of the feudal, reactionary class. The Party lays down the condition of a formal guarantee of the permanent maintenance of the republican regime and its progressive socialist orientation in Syria. It is not to be considered as a temporary stage, to end at a later date by a monarchy. This condition pre-supposes the alternation of Syria and Iraq as a Head of the Union.

A Rallying Call

In the light of the present situation, marked by political confusion in Syria and a deviation from criteria of the Nation's interest, and in view of conflicting currents, which are rather revealing of rivalry between colonial powers than of fundamental disagreement between the country's sons, the Arab Ba'th firmly believes that it is its duty to take a stand, and represent nationalist policy in the highest sense of the term, and do all in its power to unite all the elements which are devoted to its cause and totally discard foreign proposals and influence. It hereby invites these elements to join its ranks, in order that colonialist endeavours may be repulsed and the people may regain confidence once more in national aims and their own ability to achieve them, without any obligation to become beasts of burden in the service of foreign interests and mercenary politicians.

Chapter VII

New Principles of Nationalism

During the fifties, Arab revolutionary ideology entered a new era, which was to tighten the bonds between nationalist theory and unitarian strategy.

At the beginning of this period, nationalist socialist thought began by defining its essential principles and towards the end of it, achieved its first experience of unity between two Arab countries i.e. the fusion of 1958.

1950 was an eventful year. It saw the appearance of an original series of amendments to the nationalist concept of inqilâb (upheaval), which enabled it to start afresh on new foundations and draw together theory and its instrument. Reference to the many subjects covered by Michel 'Aflaq in "Following the Ba'th" and the second volume of "The Ba'th's Struggle" reveals through their title-headings the general framework of the amendments which enabled Arab revolutionary ideology to reach a level hitherto unattained:

"The Future."

"The Global Intellectual Movement."

"The Arab Ba'th is a Historic Movement."

"The Arab Ba'th, an Expression of Our Great Determination."

"The Arab Ba'th Stands for inqilâb (Upheaval)."

"Time and the Movement of inqilâb (Upheaval)."
"What is the Meaning of inqilâb (Upheaval)?"
"Concerning inqilâb (Upheaval)."
"The Meaning of the Eternal Mission."
"The Eternal Mission. Arabs Between Past and Future."
"The Law of Patriotic Struggle; the Unity of the Movement and Stability of Thought."
"Progressivism Links Us to Our Past."

These titles reveal the salient points which polarized Arab revolutionary thought during the period under review:

a) The determinating revolutionary character of the conception of the Arab revolutionary movement and its organization.

b) The historic nature of the movement.

c) The global, systematic nature of the new Arab revolutionary doctrine.

These articles and conferences engaged a real dialogue with the new Arab generation and were addressed to every Arab in his wholeness, not simply to his reasoning faculty. A study of these can only be complete and objective if seen in the context of the struggle which was their background. Struggle itself entered into a dialogue —this time with reality, a reality bristling with contradictions, which could only be resolved by the maturation of the various combats resumed in Arab revolutionary ideology: those opposing fragmentation, colonialism, Zionist occupation, under-development and class exploitation.

In the light of the above, we can discern certain underlying principles:

1. Pertaining to Arab nationalism implies total revolt

against the present condition of the Arab Nation. Faith in inqilâb (upheaval) presupposes affiliation to Arab nationalism. Any man who fails to establish a link between his affiliation to the Arab Nation and his rebellion against its condition, who revolts only with moderation against his own condition before joining the struggle against that of society, who fails to adopt the nationalist spirit totally and to think of himself as a representative of the whole Nation in miniature... this man has no right to claim kinship with Arab revolutionary ideology[28].

2. Any action aimed at helping the Arab Nation to rid itself of under-development and all the contradictions which at the moment make it a stranger unto itself and its present condition, inevitably correspond to the necessities of the stage in history through which the whole world is passing. It is in perfect harmony with logic and the march of history. All those who work towards this end can count on a support, infinitely more valuable than that of its militants, which is visible but inevitably limited, for they also reap the benefit of the incalculable aid that the logic of History, the pressure of current and future events bring to bear on forces today. They are borne on by the future. The present moment is favourable to revolutionary forces all the world over[29].

3. In an ailing, under-developed society wherein the vast majority live in ignorance of their true existence and are a prey to its weaknesses, to incomprehension and to servitude, the conscious minority, which is alive to its responsibilities, has a role of the first importance. This minority is divided into two camps —the first in favour

28. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th.* "Arabism and the Movement fighting for inqilâb (upheaval)". 3rd Ed. pp. 170-175.
29. Id. *Ibid.*

of inqilâb (upheaval) and the second in favour of opportunism. The cardinal problem is that of leadership, the designation of those capable of aspiring to leadership. If our society remains under-developed, it is due to the fact that those in place do not fulfil the necessary intellectual, moral and spiritual requirements[30].

4. The eternal mission of the Arab people is to launch themselves totally, audaciously, into changing their destiny and their present condition. Even if the price exacted is great suffering and hardship, they must take to the road of resurgence. Their mission resides in their determination to reveal to the world the calamities of their society and the degrading nature of their lives, with the same candour they reveal in examining their own defects. They will need fierce, bold determination; they must rely on their own resources, without counting on any help from the outside world. But their mission will not stop there... It is intimately bound up with the Nation's sons, their lives and experiences. And it is not for tomorrow; it is already on the verge of taking place[31].

5. "Nationalist strife must attain a high intellectual and scientific level of a universal, civilizing nature, capable of transcending Time. In the same way that all nations which have attained prosperity and progress have done, (We must follow our natural path). It is this nucleus, totally devoted to the national cause, which is called upon to acquire sufficient clarity of mind to guide their steps and bestow on them self-command and the strenghth to assume their tasks with all the gravity the situation requires. In every Arab there lies hidden the germ of moral values, a feeling of deep responsibility and

30. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th,* "Arabism and the Movement fighting for inqilâb (upheaval)". 3rd Ed.

31. "The Eternal Mission", 4th Ed., p. 109.

the spark of faith. When we say that we desire to create a whole new generation, we do not mean that we shall infuse into it all knowledge; we only aspire to calling out its virtualities, reviewing its culture and giving it true orientation. To bring this to pass all we need is a movement capable of controlling and accelerating the course of time.[32]"

6. "The whole problems is to create out of Arab aspirations for a better life and their desire to extricate themselves from their present condition, a movement capable of dominating every possible situation. The first condition it must fulfil is to become equal to the cause it seeks to defend: the spirit on which it is built must draw its inspiration from the Arab personality in its entirety and resolve all the important problems of daily life. The same is true for the movement's organization; it must remain faithful to the Arab soul and draw its support from the classes which live these cardinal problems from day to day."

7. "The Nation can only retrieve unity through ardent strife... and by thoroughly examining its own condition. Struggle, in its widest and deepest sense, is the means by which the Arab soul can be reborn and inqilâb (upheaval) become a reality. Real unity is a serious matter. It is not the same thing as political unity, for it implies spiritual unity between members of the same Nation. Only steadfast effort in struggle can give us access to the depths of this soul.[33]"

8. "We stand for Freedom, Socialism and Unity. This is the Nation's interest. When I say 'Nation', I speak of the great majority of the people, not the small,

32. "Time and the Movement of inqilâb (upheaval)", 4th Ed. p. 75-77.

33. "The Global Intellectual Movement", 4th Ed., p. 32-33.

incongruous minority, foreign to the Nation, which enslaves the people so better to satisfy its egotism and self-interest. These have no place in the Nation...

"We stand for the amalgamation of three main forces: the interest of the Arab people today, Arab history of the past and the history of Man in his evolution towards freedom, socialism and unity.[34]"

9. "We are militating to combat social and political situations, lies and corruption, not only with a view to eliminating and changing these factors, but also to ensuring that the Nation shall retrieve unity in strife. As a result of the interminable period of lethargy into which it fell, and the lies told about it, the Nation has become a stranger unto itself. Like its members, it no longer recognizes its own face. It has lived in a state of acute division; it accepted submission and became a prisoner to private interests and chronic stagnation. Can such a state of things encourage the unity of the Nation? It must now take the opposite road and set its face against the present situation, dominated by sickness and corruption. It must stem the current and change its course.

It devolves from this that inqilâb (upheaval) is the way to the aim and to the sound society to which we aspire. It is not one way among many others. It is the only way. Our past was synonymous with inqilâb and inqilâb alone can enable us to rise to the level of our past and become one with it[35]. Only the progressive path militating towards inqilâb (upheaval) can link us fully with our past; our progress will be assured; we shall never fall into decay, never go back, never congeal in immobility.

10. Since inqilâb's objective is the building of a new

34. "The Arab Ba'th Stands for inqilâb (upheaval)", 4th Ed. pp. 65-70.

35. "The Ba'th is the will of life", 4th Ed. pp. 40-42.

future, totally different from our present situation, what are our future perspectives? These will be defined by the Nation in complete freedom, according to requirements. In the measure that the Nation is able to dispose freely of its destiny, it will find increased harmony within itself, greater fidelity to its nature and to its very genius[36].

11. If differences between reactionary and revolutionary concepts are not clear and decisive, a large proportion of freedom-forces will be totally wasted. Amendments made by the revolutionary party should put an end to the destructive period and throw open the way to national reconstruction on sound foundations. It is not, as partisans of conservatism and exploitation would have us think, progress towards freedom which may prove a danger. Danger comes rather from the propagation of lies and misrepresentations: these congeal vital elements in conservative circles where they are imprisoned. It also comes from lack of firmness on the part of freedom-forces when it comes to putting an end to superficial pretences and the slovenliness of uncertain elements.

12. A clear dividing-line must be established between the reactionary conception, which opposes historic and social evolution, and that of revolution, which enables society to forsake inertia and rise above stagnation and under-development. The latter is, however, viewed by reaction as an annihilation of the past. The revolutionary conception is, in reality, an immediate reply to any attempt to lead the people into error and clarifies the view of a secular state. It is precisely the secular conception which will give new significance to

36. "What is the meaning of inqilâb (upheaval)?", 4th Ed., pp. 84-89.

spiritual values and preserve them from misuse and decadence[37].

"..It is by contending established values to the ultimate limit of contradiction that a spiritual vocation frees itself and acquires its true value. It takes wing, rises above all falsehood and becomes a transparent receptacle in which material and social problems come to rest. A spiritual vocation is forged in the crucible of genuine problems, and it is out of them that it draws the strength to rise, through hardship and suffering, to its apex. With material problems resolved, it then reveals itself to us in its truth and its reality.

"We call for a secular state to avoid religion being weighted down by the burden of politics, to avoid its implication in political ambiguïties. Only if it is free in this way can religion find its true place in the lives of individuals and of society."

13. The relationship between State and religion is one of the major preoccupations of the Nation, and one of more than immediate impact. It is deeply linked with the Nation and its past, and with its future. The very spiritual and legal foundations of future Arab nationalism depend upon it.

From this introduction to an article entitled "Arabs between Past and Future"[38], it can be deduced that the Arab Ba'th is a national movement and addresses itself to all Arabs, independently of their doctrine or religion. For Michel 'Aflaq, freedom of conscience is a sacred thing. He places all religions on the same footing and looks on them with the same respect and the same esteem. The social basis of the State is nationalism, and its moral basis is freedom. The State's secular character will only confirm freedom in its spiritual and moral

37. "Arabs Between Past and Future", 4th Ed., pp. 160-168.
38. Id. *Ibid.*

aspect. We call for a secular state to avoid religion being weighted down by the burden of politics and to avoid its implication in political ambiguïties. Only if it is free in this way can religion find its true place in the lives of individuals and of society. So will it find its own truth; so will it know the rejuvenation of its eternal soul;this is one of the indispensable conditions for the resurgence of the Nation.

We thus perceive that the new nationalist conception avoids for Arab nationalism the distortions and errors of both abstract and religious nationalism. The new vision of national life which is that of the Arab revolutionary movement is not to be confused with religion, but it does, on the other hand, categorically refuse stagnation, opportunism and hypocricy by remaining true to the principles which offer Arabs the means to extricate themselves from under-development, fragmentation and the denial of spiritual and social values.

14. Real progressivism is the liberation of the natural evolution of a nation with a future, and the recognition of all that makes up its living history. The freedom for which we clamour is the freeing of the Nation from bondage and from its consequences, by which it has been weighted down throughout this interminable period of paralysis and stagnation. In order to retrieve its free, creative spirit, the Nation must break for ever with under-development, as we know it today, realize the impossible and conjugate all its efforts to create a new personality. Reaction stands for treason on two fronts —that of the Nation's past and that of its future[39].

15. Real struggle, the struggle which will bring victory, is founded on the vital forces of the Nation, which it assembles and organizes. In its fight to bring about great

39. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Vol. II, p. 40.

national objectives —freedom, socialism and unity— the Arab people encounter formidable reactionary opposition, from within and from without. The Nation can only ensure success if it is buttressed by vital forces fighting for freedom. A single movement is therefore indispensable to carry out this task and give direction to these forces by adopting a common road towards a sole objective[40].

"The definition of the progressive conception emphasizes the contradiction opposing reactionary tendencies to the Nation's interest and to the march of history and contributes to defining the Arab revolutionary movement's attitude concerning the Nation's past... In the same way, the road we have mapped out, which enabled Arab revolutionary thought to break through and find expression, helps us to distinguish between militants and adventurers. We can say, in all objectivity, that militants 'create' strife but remain the true agents of the movement they have founded; they sacrifice the fruits of their struggle and place them at the movement's service in order that the latter may continue on the true path and keep faith with the logic of its ideology. In the case of adventurers, however, struggle attracts and fascinates during periods of facility; they hurl themselves onto the battlefield with no real conviction. As soon as they make a name and obtain a measure of power, they rebel against the constraints of struggle, in the hope of leaping ahead and ensuring their own personal success. Sooner or later they inevitably find themselves obliged to plot against and betray the Nation."

It is clear from this that, during the early fifties, the cardinal principles which left their mark on the Arab revolutionary movement revolved around the axis of

40. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Voll. II, p. 40.

Arab unity in struggle, both as an idea and as an instrument, and around intellectual requirements and organizational imperatives for the launching of the Arab revolution on new bases.

These principles gave rise to the adoption of a critical attitude with regard to the revolutionary movement's organization, which was to become the instrument for achieving specific aims.

"The Arab Ba'th has rendered two major services to the Arab cause; the first was the clarification of the justness of Arab objectives, their correlation and unity; the second was the tracing of the true path which would bring these objectives to fruition. We can, moreover, affirm that the Ba'th's major activity to date has been largely confined to giving the movement direction and preparing the climate and the intellectual and psychological conditions favourable to the acceptance of revolutionary ideology. We must, however, admit that before the Arab Ba'th can be considered a fully-fledged movement, there is still much to be done.[41]"

This attitude is an indication of the new approach of the Arab revolutionary movement, which, thanks to Arab evolutionary ideology's watchwords, responded to all the subjective and objective requirements of the new phase.

In 1951, the Arab revolutionary movement adopted unitarian political positions, which translated its main theories on a practical, scientific level.

1. The Arab Revolutionary Movement warned the Arab League against any adherence to the Western colonialist bloc. It exacted the adoption of a neutral position whith regard to international conflicts, expressing in this way the independence of Arab nationalism

41. "The Organization of inqilâb (upheaval)", 4th Ed. pp. 71-74.

and the Leftist tendency adopted by the movement. In the declaration of June 27th, 1951, it stated:

"The Arab people, who are fighting throughout the length and breadth of their territory against foreign colonization and exploitation within their frontiers, reject all attempts to implicate them in a battle which would be of no service to their cause and would constrain them to abandon the national interest at the present time. Their national interest is the freeing of Arabs from the yoke of British, French and American colonialism, the realization of global, national unity and the establishment of a free, socialist system, guaranteeing social justice and dignity of life."[42]

This declaration did not limit itself to "warning the Arab League against adherence to either of the two blocs".It also denounced all forms of false neutrality, which were "both senseless and absurd". It equally exacted that "the Arab League adopt true neutrality and so prevent united Western colonialist Powers from transforming our country into military zones and using our petrol and other resources in the battle they are presently waging". It added that the masses alone —and in no case governments— were the true guarantors of neutrality. It demanded that "nationalist forces be mobilized to guarantee neutrality and define the reality of the cause for which the Arab people are fighting in order to regain their rights and undo the conspiracies of colonialists and their henchmen". Neutrality, as understood by the Arab revolutionary movement, corresponds to an attitude and to a political and strategic theory situating the Arab revolution —which is an integral part of the Arab movement— at the very heart of world-struggle. The

42. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Vol. II, p. 89.

movement is fighting for the realization of the revolution's objectives.

2. This attitude which became manifest in the appeal launched to the Arabs, inciting them to lead the patriotic movement's cause to victory, enabled the Arab revolutionary movement to bring all its weight to bear in Merrakech's struggle against colonialism. The declaration of March 2nd, 1951, stated our firm conviction that the Arab cause was one. By responding to the appeal for help launched by Merrakech, the people gave, above all else, "absolute proof of the unitarian aspect of the Arab Nation". Colonialism offers the same characteristics everywhere. It was responsible for the hanging of free men in Egypt. It shelled Damascus, tortured Lebanese militants and brutalized combatants in Iraq... Only the unity of the people can bar the way to colonialist forces as a whole, and it is for this reason that the declaration ended with an appeal to "the struggle for unity."[43]

3. In the declaration issued during the Party Council in July 1951, the Arab revolutionary movement called on "the Arab people, wherever they may be, to unify the Arab struggle". The revolutionary movement emphasized that "governments are instruments of division, an obstacle to struggle and an incitement to perpetuate the present deplorable situation". It added that "the Arab League is, in miniature, a perfect reflection of these governments, who created the League with the intention of preventing the Arabs from realizing genuine, positive unity". It calls on all socialist parties throughout Arab countries to unite their efforts to create a common national charter. The declaration expressed the Arab people's refusal to be diverted from the question of

43. Id: *Ibid;* p. 103.

Palestine and their firm intention to continue in their acute involvement. "The Arabs must on no account be fobed off with a strip of land on which to park refugees. Neither must they stretch out a hand to Israel, nor make peace with her. Negotiation of any sort would inevitably consolidate both the Zionist State and colonialism, which encouraged the birth of Israël and uses it as a powerful weapon against the Arabs."[44]

4. By means of a series of manifestations, political stands, telegrams and declarations, the Arab revolutionary movement expressed its support of the Arab people's combat against British colonialism in Egypt and its adhesion to the watchwords calling for strife. This was destined to undo colonialist conspiracies which, on the pretext of defending the Middle East, reduced the movement's plan to ashes. All these stands require unity in the Arab struggle, and the refusal of any alliance what-so-ever with colonialism or neutrality. The junction between the struggle for freedom and the national struggle against fragmentation is the essential principle which must condition all solutions, and political analyses devolve out of the stands mentioned above[45].

"Throughout every Region, Arabs who are victims of fragmentation and colonialism, must look on colonial enemy powers as a united whole, hostile to the freedom of the Arab people and its national unity. They must oppose colonialist projects by forming united groups and waging furious combat against them. They must pay no attention to the supposed Soviet threat brandished by colonialist powers. The Arab problem is the violent opposition of Western colonialism and Zionism. In the eyes of the Arab Ba'th, the only real problem for Arabs

44. Id: *Ibid;* p. 132.
45. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 149-150.

in every Region of the Nation is that of unitarian strife against colonialism and Zionism."

5. The anniversary of the Balfour Declaration on November 2nd, 1951, gave the Arab revolutionary movement an opportunity to define the operational strategy which should inspire Arab activity in the current phase, on the basis of an analysis of this particular date's significance. The salient points were as follows:

a) Support for Egypt in its fight for liberation in the face of British colonialism.

b) The fight for the withdrawal of foreign troops in all other Arab territories.

c) The setting-up of a system of common defence, in spite of the incitation of Arab governments to reject such a project definitively.

d) The decision to adopt a policy of neutrality in the international conflict.

e) The fight for the establishment of a popular regime, capable of realizing Arab unity and dealing a fatal blow at colonialism and its ally Zionism.

It thus becomes clear that the correlation between national objectives and those of freedom were the central axis around which nationalist ideology, and all its attendant attitudes, revolved. The first practical application of this strategy was the appeal launched by the headquarters of the Arab revolutionary movement to all its members. It conjured them "to offer their lives to the unity of the Arab struggle by joining the ranks of the liberation-troops in Egypt; unity in the struggle is our only salvation."[46]

6. In an article published in the Ba'th Party's newspaper on December 22nd 1951, entitled "The Arab

46. Id: *Ibid;* p. 161.

Cause is One, for it represents the Cause of a Single Nation which is One and the Same", the Arab revolutionary movement denounced the colonialist policy of a dialogue aiming at the annihilation of the Arab struggle and, particularly, at isolating Egypt from other Arab countries during the fierce combat it was waging against British colonialism. The following is an extract from the article in question.

"What colonialism most fears is Arab union in the struggle. It has broken up the Arab Homeland into small countries and fomented internal conflicts around artificial problems. It now finds itself confronted with a new attitude, for the Arabs are on the march towards unity, the unity of the Nation and of their destiny. With a view to demolishing the idea of unity, colonialism has created various nations and aroused contradictory interests around the united Arab cause. The Arabs must never take their eyes off this fact; the Arab cause must consider, among its most formidable threats, the danger represented by the eventual disintegration of nationalist ideology. Division of the nation's cause would ineluctably lead to division in the people's unitarian struggle and a consequent weakening of militant spirit. This is the most serious danger that can threaten us. The danger of the entire Homeland being occupied by great armies would be disminished for the Nation if the people preserved their sense of unity in strife. Arab policy must for this reason be based on the unity of the people in struggle."[47]

Basing on the above its criticism of the reactionary regime which preceded for a period of seven months the Revolution of July 23rd in Egypt, until the Constitution of the Phalanx of Loyalty, the Arab revolutionary movement continued in the following terms:

47. Id: *Ibid;* p. 172.

"We do not believe that the 'pashas' are capable of leading the Egyptian people to victory, for they understand nothing of the people and belong to the feudal class in power. Everyone knows that in Egypt the reactionary regime, in alliance with colonialism, is plotting to bind Egypt hand and foot indirectly by means of a military pact at the service of the West."[48]

This article, published in the Ba'th Party newspaper on December 22nd 1951, ended with an appeal to the people to destroy colonialism, within and without; colonialism was opposed to the freedom of the people and was doing all in its power to prevent the realization of the union of the whole Arab people in its fight against colonialist alliances.

48. Id: *Ibid;* p. 174.

Chapter VIII

Unity in the Struggle and the Struggle for Unity

Arab revolutionary thought and the combat experience undertaken by the Arab Nation continued to crystallize in depth and amplitude, on the basis of the principles established and the real improvements made to the nationalist concept in 1950. Events which followed during that year confirmed the revolutionary content of nationalism, its civilizing impact and its proletarian, progressive and secular bent, all converging, in fidelity to the concepts of "freedom and socialism", towards the resurgence of the Nation and the class-struggle. The series of amendments to theory made during the fifties gave precise and vigorous confirmation of the reality which enables us to define the full extent and value of the new nationalist concept.

In 1952, following on the fusion of two organizational structures —the Arab Ba'th and the Arab Socialist Party— a tacit dialogue began between two divergent theories adopting different positions with regard to unity. Under the title, "The Revolutionary Nature of Arab Unity", published in February 1953, Michel 'Aflaq gave echo to these discussions.

In its attempt to clarify and define the concept of unity arising out of Arab revolutionary ideology on all

fronts —theoretic, strategic or tactical— this article represents an important step. It was the first precise criticism of the regionalist concept of unity in opposition to the new unitarian theory, based on a dialectical logic linking together effectively the struggle for unity and unity in the fight.

1. "Arab unity is neither the consequence nor the result of something else. It is a new idea which is to guide and accompany strife."

2. "Unity does not take place of its own accord, mechanically, as the natural consequence of certain conditions and evolutions. Existing conditions cannot encourage it and evolution could well take place in an opposite direction and bring about an artificial crystallization of fragmentation. In this particular sense, it is an effective, creative force, capable of stemming the current and the flow of time. As an idea, it takes the direction of inqilâb (upheaval) and militant activity."

3. "The logic of fragmentation does not only prevent assimilated movements in Arab countries from uniting together and co-operating; it also impels them to contradict and oppose each other."

4. "Partisans of false unity believe that unity is a mechanical process to be attained through political unification, as and when conditions and opportunity permit. For them, it only requires preparation on a political level and could be brought about by negotiations and manoeuvres. They look on unity as an insignificant matter in comparison with regional preoccupations, which are given extreme attention. In the eyes of the Arab Ba'th, however, unity is an ideal of capital importance, with its own intrinsic theory, like freedom and socialism. It demands permanent, organized, daily struggle in the name of its principles. It also encounters practical phases which only reinforce the struggle and open the way to final victory."

5. "The Arab Ba'th is the first socialist party of the Arab world. But, in spite of this, it did not adopt the name of Socialist Party. Its understanding of freedom as an idea and of its cardinal role, has been reached, as far as depth, maturity and clarity are concerned, by no other party. Neither did it adopt the name 'Democratic Party', because it accorded to unity a progressive, moral value and because it was convinced, from the very beginning, that any theory or solution concerning vital Arab problems, whether of an individual or general nature, which did not emanate from the self-evidence of the "Unity of the Arab Nation', would be false and pernicious".

6. "It is impossible for the Arab people to realize unity in struggle unless they launch into the struggle for unity".

These are the main ideas which are revealed in Professor Michel 'Aflaq's article on "The Revolutionary Nature of Arab Unity".

We perceive through this that, for the new nationalist way of thought, fragmentation is no longer a self-evident fact. It has for the first time, renounced without a trace of ambiguity the mental acceptation of fragmentation, in the middle-class, anti-socialist and lower middle-class sense of the word —a progressive reforming attitude which maintains socialist and democratic concepts in the framework of division. Nationalist thought, moreover, clearly defined the proletarian and revolutionary concept of unity.

All stands adopted by the Arab revolutionary movement during this period consequently expressed in practice the criteria of sound unity; it sought to consolidate them in its fight and criticized all false attitudes which diverged from these criteria.

In an article in the magazine "The New Arab",

which came into print in Iraq in October 1953, this principle was emphasized. Under the title "The Unity of the Arab Struggle"[49], this magazine took up once more the ideas expressed in the article "The Revolutionary Nature of Arab Unity", in the light of which it analysed the causes of failure of progress towards freedom achieved in the past and denounced its regionalistic character. It explained, moreover, the way in which abnormal conditions of fragmentation had already created an insurmountable obstacle which barred the way to realization of unity between organizations and parties in the struggle. It stated that the first necessity, if this obstacle was to be avoided, was the relinquishment of the regionalist outlook.

In 1954 the Arab revolutionary movement became famous for its role in Syria on the level of direct political action. It triumphed over the military dictatorship (shyshaklī) and manifested the movement's transition to a new era, one which was to give it an opportunity to exert its influence decisively on the course of every-day political life, on both a popular and an official level.

During the same year a new national organization came into being; it reflected its organization's nature on a national scale and encouraged the formation of the first national command. All this concurred in a concrete expression of the Nation's aspirations i.e. a formula of government guaranteeing the centralization of decisions as a result of the expansion of the Ba'th movement's activity, the extent of its action and its growing influence on the Arab Nation.

Although the leadership of the Party had, from the very beginning, been nationalistic in thought and the nature of its action, it was not until 1954 that the form of national organization took on an official character,

49. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Vth Part, p. 22.

corresponding to a need for the crystallization of relations between the Party's leadership and action on objective bases on the part of organizations in the various Regions.

At the beginning of this period, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party had great ambition, which revealed itself as a feeling of historic responsibility and an aspiration on the highest level of combat on a theoretical and practical scale. It was accompanied by a realization of the expanding role of the Arab revolutionary movement and a feeling of doubt and mistrust with regad to the effects of traditional political methods and approaches.

Professor Michel 'Aflaq expressed this state of mind in a speech made during the Party festivities on April 9th, 1954[50]:

"We must have a clear and simple view of the role to be played by the Party at this grave moment of the Nation's life. It is my deep fear that political preoccupations may assume inordinate importance, that batles and struggles may follow one upon another and that the Party may allow itself to joy in the delights of victory. The Party's chosen task would then lose something of its clarity, its simplicity and its importance. It is our bounden duty never to lose sight of our task, but to keep it ever-fresh in our minds."

What exactly is this task? What is the criterium to which the Party must adhere, if it is to carry out its duty? During his speech, Professor Michel 'Aflaq gives the answers to these questions:

"Our Party cannot be a Party in the real sense of the word at the present time, unless it rises to the level of other contemporary movements in the world. Ours is the

50. *The Ba'th's Struggle.* Vol. II, p. 225.

Party of inqilâb (upheaval). It will not be satisfied with simply exploiting the situation as it stands. It has taken the decision to provoke a historic and an intellectual upheaval in the life of the Nation."

Professor Michel 'Aflaq did not stop at defining the task incumbent on the Arab revolutionary movement at this particular moment in history, nor at indicating the criterium the movement was obliged to observe. He also delineated the necessary conditions for attaining the level in question. The movement, according to him, had to be capable of audacious criticism; it should not be afraid of self-criticism nor of challenging the chosen path; it had to be prepared to rectify mistakes in policy and avoid all deviations:

"This is our destiny. We shall never be certain for one single day that we have reached our aim, that we have known truth or have followed the just path. We ourselves must be ever-ready to revise our way, our thoughts and our progress, in order that our ideology can mature, gain in authenticity and avoid deteriorating into superficiality and imitation. Only so can we avoid the pitfalls of vanity into which so many others have fallen."

We can, in the light of these new criteria, draw the lessons of the phase through which Arab revolutionary ideology passed during the following period, which was crowned by the crystallization of the idea of unity around a concrete slogan allying theory, political strategy and daily tactics. During this period, the Party's view of itself and of the Arab revolutionary movement was marked by its feeling of historic responsibility, and its ideas, particularly as far as nationalist thought was concerned, developed into a concrete proof of its unitarian policy

which, in 1958, achieved its first contemporary experience of unity.

In 1955 improvements of theory confirmed the accession of both the nationalist conception and its representative movement to a hitherto unknown revolutionary level. The following title-headings bear this out[51]:

"The Experience of the Aged and the Impulsion of Youth."

"Our Living Conception of the Party."

"Our Form of Nationalism is Free of Religious Sectarianism and Racism."

"Unity in Strife and a Common Destiny."

"The Struggle between Superficial Existence and True Life."[52]

The following original reflection made in a speeech given on the anniversary of the withdrawal of foreign troops from Syrian territory on April 17th, 1955, is the most important progress recorded by revolutionary ideology with regard to the nationalist concept:

"It is high time the Arabs put an end to pretexts which enable them to escape their responsibilities. They must no longer accuse colonialism of being the root of all evil. They must examine problems deeply and from within. They must, from first to last, consider themselves as being alone responsible for their fate."

What then had we to do?

"We wish to see an end to counter-reactions and resignation. We must encourage the participation of the greatest possible number of our people's sons in the Nation's cause, that they may take in hand their own

51. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th,* pp. 23, 43, 169, 223.
52. *The Battle for a Unique Destiny,* pp. 25-32.

destiny. It is only by setting in motion this extraordinary force represented by the people —whose weight on the battle-field has so far been neglected— that we can hope to transform our vision of ourselves, alter our attitude to colonialism and cease to look on it as a presence imposed by destiny. These are the cardinal points which separate us from other governments within the Arab Homeland, and at the same time, those which are the breaking-point between a present stamped by incompetence and a future full of promise, wide open to manifold realizations."

In the same speech, Professor Michel 'Aflaq spoke for the first time of the main characteristic of the phase of history and of the contemporary national revolution on both the Arab and the international plane.

"The masses of the world are beginning to play their true role —the popular masses of Asia and Africa who were, from within and from without, among the greatest victims of enslavement and suffered the greatest injustice at the hands of their own and foreign peoples. The revolution of Eastern peoples, unlike that of the West, is above all directed towards freedom and bears a humanitarian character, because it is fighting against colonialism. Injustice in the West, moreover, only affects certain classes of society, whereas in the East whole nations are its victim. Of these, the Arab Nation is one."

The founder and leader of the Party reached the following conclusion:

"It the Arab Ba'th is not a nationalist Party, it has no justification for existence. Its nationalism is, in fact, the pledge of its humanism."

Such a conclusion may appear to be a statement of the obvious. If, however, we take into consideration the present state of things, the attitudes of governments and their ambiguous position with regard to colonialist alliances on the one hand and regionalist reformist trends on the other, and all the socialist theories which have infiltrated into the heart of the Arab revolutionary movement (including those which neglect both the sense of the revolutionary experience and its national liberating impact, and those which hide behind internationalism, and transform other forces into a source of power on which to draw, in confronting their own enemies), Professor Michel 'Aflaq's conclusion can only consolidate both the nationalist conception, its revolutionary content for the masses and its liberating impact. It enables us to situate the essential sources of inspiration which will impel the Arab people to launch out and ensure the success of its revolutionary experience. Professor Michel 'Aflaq ended his speech with the following words:

"At the head of the Arab people there is a fully-conscious vanguard, convinced of its potential. This vanguard will continue its historic struggle for freedom on the road promised to any sincere and genuine enterprise, on the road to re-birth which has surged from its own mainsprings, in order that minds might grow before means were perfected, on the path where flows the life-current of the Nation's soul, born from the deep-rooted longing to see itself free. The day the Nation's soul becomes tempered through strife, the day combat-ardour invades the heart of the masses, then will another face of reality be revealed."

This discussion arose out of daily militant experience and aimed at destroying attitudes which deviated from

the Arab revolutionary path and also at consolidating the new nationalist logic. In a speech on April 7th, 1955, Professor Michel 'Aflaq brought this out in a protest against the statement: "Experience is the prerogative of the elderly; youth is the carefree, thoughtless age". He revealed the logic of under-development and defined new criteria of judgment [53].

"More than any other, an underdeveloped society, where revolution and inqilâb (upheaval) are inevitable, has need of its youth, need of those who possess the maximum potential, the finest human qualities, sure and unencumbered vision, a spirit ready for strife, free from the defects of opportunism, cowardice, defeatism, the burden of phraseology, and are ready to assume the renewal of the Nation. That which appears as a defect in the eyes of the older generation is, in fact, the perfection of youth. All that we see around us today —particularly in official institutions— is none other than a criminal attempt to produce a generation of old men and women, senile before their time— and a nation that submits to under-development."

The succession of interviews and speeches since 1955 reveal an attempt to define the intellectual and moral conditions which would enable the young heroes who make up the rising generation of the Arab revolutionary movement to assume sucessfully the task they are called upon to accomplish.

During an interview, Professor Michel 'Aflaq defined the vision of the Arab revolutionary movement out of which Arab revolutionary ideology devolved. "Our Living Concept of the Party" [54]:

53. *Following the Ba'th,* 4th Ed. pp. 23-25.
54. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 43-46.

"Youth must come to realize that those who have left their mark on life and on history are those who were inhabited by heroic faith, who preserved the innocence, the energy and spontaneity of little children, and paid no heed to difficulties or to external pressure."

This was the first condition. The second concerned the relinquishment of idealism —any vision imposed by a school of thought, unrelated to reality, which ignored the heart, the life of the masses and its rapid evolution.

"No serious work can have an effective impact on the present situation and transform it into a new reality without entailing as many risks as an immense ocean or a stormy sea. If it is your desire that your Party's action shall be of historic dimension, it must be looked on as an ocean and not as a limpid stream. It would be an easy matter to make our movement into a limpid stream, but this would not quench the thirst of a nation nor would it make history."

The third condition was the avoidance of dogmatic ultra-conservatism.

"Only a living concept of the Party is possible for us. It must be ever-moving, ever-renewed, ever-creative. It is precisely its evolution, its renewal and its creativity which avail the means for rectification and purification each time it is attacked. At any moment, a movement runs the risk of losing its spontaneity, its freedom and authenticity, and giving in to traditional slogans. And then it becomes a statue."

Professor 'Aflaq added a fourth condition —the aptitude for permanent strife and for the inner tension favourable to the full realization of the revolutionary movements objectives.

"We must stimulate strife and inner tension. We must maintain our impetus, combat lethargy, resist the temptation to enjoy the lull between storms and resist any attempt to bring struggle to an end, to shorten its duration and conclude this heroic phase before the time is ripe."

Professor Michel 'Aflaq's interview with the students of the Arab Maghreb during 1955 ("Our Nationalism has freed itself from Religious Sectarianism and Racism")[55] showed a step forward in this urge to highlight the nationalist conception and its new socialist, humanitarian liberating character[56].

"Our conception of Arabism is totally different from traditional concepts. We have defined our view of nationalism as a socialist one, working towards freedom. These are real guarantees... Injustice is not the lot of only a minority or certain groups; the greater part of the whole Arab people is, on the contrary, its victim. Our view of Arabism knows nothing of ultra-conservatism, nothing of sclerosis; we take no pride in our affiliation or in our beginnings... It is totally foreign to the Nazi view of nationalism... Arabism is a humanitarian idea and Arab nationalism stands for real humanism. It reveres the nationalist sentiments of others and as a result, venerates these same feelings in all other races... Fanatical nationalism is in our country a product of colonialism and of sectarian propaganda directed at consolidating colonialism."

"These improvements proved an essential factor in contributing to the clarification of the vision of political reality and the solution of the problems it raised in a deep, radical, total, revolutionary manner. The anniver-

55. Id: *Ibid;* 4th Ed. pp. 169-179.
56. Id: *Ibid;* 4th Ed. pp. 172-175.

sary of the Palestine disaster and that of Alexandretta on November 29th, 1955, gave us an opportunity to disclose the connection between defense-plans in the Middle East and the consolidation of the bastions of Western colonialism and Zionism. It became possible to state with certainty that "the freeing of Palestine from perfidious Zionist occupation and the removal of foreign presence from all Arab Regions can only be accomplished by force, by organizing the power of the Arab people and unifying popular forces throughout every Region. We must encourage those who combat with fury all projects aimed at consolidating the stronghold of Western colonialism and Zionism and call for non-alignment, so as to enable Arabs to improve their weapons and prepare for the final battle"[57].

In 1956, a new phenomenon appeared —the fecundity of new political orientations began to delineate a well-defined Arab revolutionary ideology. Apart from the concept of unity and its link with popular strife, improvements of theory concerned the problem of the relation between national strife and the class-struggle; and encouraged a re-examination of the religious question and the Arab revolutionary movement's position in relation to it.

Political writings during this phase were characterized by concern with the analysis of events from the point of view of Arab revolutionary ideology. They were careful to subordinate events to the laws of the period, to underline weak points in the Arab revolutionary experience and define the correct line for Arab revolution.

The common denominator is easily found by examining the title-headings of articles and interviews of 1956; the problem of unitarian strife passed from the explica-

57. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Vol. III, p. 159.

tive stage of the idea of unity to that of practical realization.

We observe the following titles in "Dans la Voie du Ba'th":

"Our Vision of Unity and Popular Strife."
"Unity of Struggle in the Arab Maghreb."
"The Fruit of a Period of Struggle."
"The Workers' Role in the Realization of Unity and Socialism."
"Our View of Capitalism and the Class-Struggle."
"The Place of the Battle of Algiers in Our Combat."

In "La Bataille du Destin Unique" we find the following articles:

"Arab Unity and Socialism."
"Concerning Unity between Syria and Egypt."
"The Revolutionary Nature of the Arab Cause."
"The Premises of Arab Unity."
"The Fusion of Egypt and Syria is the Fruit of the Arab Fight for Freedom."
"Our Future seen through the Present Crisis."
"No Return; No Change of Direction."
"Our Revolution on the Road to Maturity."
"A New Stage for Our Combat."
"The Battle for a Unique Destiny."
"Revolutionary Policy opens the Way for Arab Co-operation."
"The People in their Wholeness are the Strongest."
"This is our Battle beyond All."
"Arab Freedom and Unity are the guarantee of their Neutrality."
"Nationalism and Humanism."

In Part IV of "La Lutte du Ba'th" we find an interview with Professor Michel 'Aflaq concerning the

situation in Egypt, where he explained the evolution of the relationship between the Arab revolutionary movement and the regime in power from the beginning until 1956.

Faced with a plethora of attempts to crystallize Arab revolutionary thought and the strategy of the Arab revolution, we can on the one hand distinguish the aspect concerning the theory of unity and the nationalist conception and, on the other hand, that which concerns the application of political thought.

On the level of theory, we can situate the following points:

A. Revolutionary ideology adopted a perfectly clear attitude concerning religion. It consecrated the theory which came into evidence in 1943 in a conference called, "In Memory of the Arab Prophet", and again in 1950 in and article entitled "The Arabs between Past and Future", in which the following considerations were accentuated:

1. Religion, as it appears to us throughout the history of humanity, since the beginning of time until the present day, is an essential factor in the lives of men. With this affirmation, we remove all petty contempt for religion, which is a serious matter.

2. We must distinguish between religion in its essence and objectives and materialized religion, or religion as it appears in conceptions, traditions, customs, interests in a given place and situation.

3. An event of the highest importance took place in our national life —the birth of Islam— an event of national, humanitarian and international impact and one of the most extraordinary experiences known to humanity. Right from its advent, it was a revolutionary movement, rising up against existing conditions —beliefs, traditions, interests... Because the truth of revolu-

tion is one and indivisible, it can only be understood in its full meaning by revolutionaries. It exacts the same psychological conditions and, to a great extent, the same objective conditions. It is normal that the revolutionary generation, which has risen up against old concepts, empty of meaning, are those who most naturally understand Islam, and show the greatest harmony and affinity with it.

4. Whether religious, sociological or theroetical, all principles and campaigns are to be judged by their actions. If we base ourselves on this criterium, the veil lifts and we find ourselves face to face with imposture, lies, ignorance and dishonesty on the part of those who, while choosing the easy road instead of difficulty and following in the wake of the conqueror of the moment, claim kinship with high principles. These are the people who stand up for exploitation, practised by one class in the name of religion, and remain silent about social injustice.

5. "Religion is not an advocate of corruption, injustice and exploitation. True religion is that which protects victims of injustice and those who revolt against corruption."

6. It is an easy matter to pass superficial judgment on religion and to consider it degenerate because its official representatives continue to uphold corruption, instead of joining the ranks of the revolution and trying to eliminate this weapon in the hands of the unrighteous. This superficial attitude was that reached by Communism, which shows that in some cases, contrary to its customary procedure, Communism fails to go to the heart of a problem.

7. We recognize the merits of the derogatory campaign against the positions adopted by religion during this century and approve them. But we go further than this. We have fought its weakness and its impos-

ture, in order that religion may retrieve its purity.

8. "In Europe, revolt against religion is itself a religion. It represents faith in the highest humanitarian moral values and comes closest to the true reality of religion. It is a revolution which bears the germ of great moral values and reforms, but its vision is incomplete for, by exacting the denial of religion it only, in fact, resolves one half of the problem. It is true that, in the present state of things, religion contributes to the increase of poverty: but when the people awake and conquer their rights and dignity, they will correct the errors of the past and find once more a sound, limpid religion in accordance with its original aims[58].

9. Ours is a positive doctrine and it always succeeds in bringing about positive conditions. We must not, however, forget that there is a great divide between our present state and the positive conditions which we shall attain once Arab inqilâb (upheaval) is accomplished. We must maintain a great inner tension between the negative condition in which we live (the ailment from which we suffer) and the theoretical objectives we have recently defined. We must, therefore, arm ourselves with courage and hold ourselves in a state of total vigilance so that we can detect the defects which still subsist and fight them with all our might. We must take the road leading to the summit and when we reach it, it will be for ever"[59].

We can in this way perceive that Arab revolutionary ideology is marked by an attitude to religion based on the unity of the dialectical links between the social and the spiritual and their indissoluble bond. In the beginning, religion is itself a revolution. It is a weapon upon

58. Extracts in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are drawn from *Our View of Religion;* pp. 102-208.

59. *Following the Ba'th* (The religious question for the Arab Ba'th)*;* p. 214.

which the labouring masses in combat are obliged to seize, and one to be torn from the hands of exploiters; this is particularly so in societies which are involved in struggle, are undergoing a revolutionary period and renewing their links with the past and the future. Revolution assembles and co-ordinates the initial impetus of religion and the contemporary revolutionary movement; the latter in turn invigorates society's urge to shake itself free from the fetters which neutralize the historic energies of the masses.

B. Arab revolutionary ideology, while avoiding a metaphysical framework or passing philosophical judgments on religion, stays strictly within the limits of scientific, revolutionary exactitude. It does not approach the matter from an abstract philosophical viewpoint but grew out of an all-encompassing dialectical vision; what today appears self-evident, is in fact inadequate, for it is still too distant from reality. Arab revolutionary ideology does not deal only with a few of the contradictions inherent in the Arab condition but exacts a completely new structure, inspired by the positive all-encompassing model. Positivism is a global vision which both covers the current phase and goes beyond it, for it is already preparing the future. The structure to be exacted is that which results from the completed cycle of dialectic reality. This is in conformity with Arab revolutionary ideology's approach to religion. The speech entitled "Our View of Arab Unity"[60] thoroughly consolidated the foundations of the theory of Arab unity, as can be seen from the following:

1. What is lacking today in Arab life is national unity. Political unity is only an adjunct. In a situation of this kind, the essential factor is that Arabs rediscover

60. Id: *Ibid;* 4th Ed. pp. 239-250.

their deep, positive sense of historic responsibility.

2. Arabs still retain a feeling of common national identity, of having once been a single nation with the same traditions and customs... But positive values have been lost, for unity cannot be maintained on negative similarities alone. Positive unity can only evolve out of a common aptitude for work, production and creativity. It cannot resist a generalized state of under-development, stagnation and all the ills which afflict the Nation.

3. "They believe that Arab unity depends on material strength, military power, or on the imposition of the authority of one small state over others, so neutralizing their disparities. When we examined the problem thoroughly, we took up the opposite stand. Arab unity can never be consolidated and be able to withstand the test of time unless a genuine spiritual rebirth takes place at the heart of Arab society, unless the people are forged anew and their weaknesses converted into strength. It is for this reason that Arab unity must, in our eyes, lead to inqilâb (upheaval) and revolution".

4. "For politicians, unity is simply an arithmetical addition, a quantitative sum... But the adding together of inanimate objects cannot produce life... Spiritual rebirth is therefore an absolute necessity, and in this way the plan of unification becomes possible. In a state of under-development and decrepitude, unification is impossible. Unless both parties carry within them the seed (however slight) of an urge and a spiritual passion, binding them together in a common aim of a higher quality than their petty, personal egotism, no real union can take place."

5. "Arab unity is the consequence of the spiritual inqilâb (upheaval) of Arab society itself and, at the same time, it is its cause and its motive power."

6. "Any single Region —even a strip of land— which remains from the outset, unaware of the fact that it is

simply an isolated element and, in consequence, incomplete and without efficacity, that it requires a complement, that its life and vision of things have no meaning unless they are seen as part of a whole, as a link in a chain, as one of the limbs of a whole body, would be unable to develop harmoniously and put its affairs in order. We must evoke the all-over idea of unity —not simply in speech, but in combat and in action".

7. "There is a mistaken idea that unity cannot arise out of the depths of Arab life in every Region, but would rather be a meeting-ground towards which Regions would converge... This would mean that each Region would retain its own particular personality, that it would be the origin and the foundation of things... Such a convergence could take place between different peoples, moving about on a continent or on parts of its territory, on whom particular conditions would impose this method of co-operation. It is the desire of colonialism to see the Arab Homeland constituted in this manner because such a superficial form of co-operation would legitimize and accentuate fragmentation. Only colonialism would benefit from such an arrangement, and it is for this reason that it encouraged the creation of the Arab League."

8. "Real unity is this — the new Arab resurgence and inqilâb (the upheaval) to which Arabs aspire should be based on the following principle, which cannot be taken lightly: Arabs make up a single Nation. No matter his appartenance, no matter the particular problems he may have to face, a man's thoughts and actions must be in keeping with this image, in the knowledge that problems can only be solved by riveting his attention on the aim of unity so that, through ceaseless toil and struggle, it may be brought to pass."

9. "Arab unity is not simply one of the many stages of struggle to take place chronologically after the end of

colonialism, feudalism or dictatorship in one Region or another. The realization of unity depends on action undertaken right from the start, because colonialism, feudal exploitation and reaction lie in wait for us. We must explain to the people that the partial problems with which they are faced and the basis of all problems —the national question— are closely linked together."

10. "If we were to reply to the question 'What is the practical way to achieve Arab unity?' we should say: 'unified struggle'... Beyond all else, Arab unity means struggle and unity in the fight, because for Arabs struggle means real life. It is through combat that we are laying the foundations of our future life and eliminating decadent factors; struggle is creating a new phase."

11. "Division in the struggle is colonialism's most dangerous weapon."

We have quoted in this outline the main principles of the theory of unity around which Arab revolutionary ideology finally crystallized in 1956. Through what has been said, we perceive that the new nationalist conception, the proletarian conception of freedom, offers us a different picture of qualitative unity than those previously defined. It rejected the superficial unity of Bismarck. It denounced the political concept of unity expressing the bourgeois view of nationalism. It attained a new level where unity is conceived in dialectical form, with popular struggle as its foundation; it does not simply confine itself "to assembling the scattered parts", but creates a totally new union of a quality superior to its unified parts. In the current Arab experience, there is a dialectical relationship between unity and revolution which makes of them the opposite poles of struggle. This dialectical link denounces the regionalism of the reformist theory of unity, which makes do with a political form of unity, within which the various Regions are

re-grouped and develop mutual co-operation and relations. It reveals at the same time the "non-revolutionary" character of this theory and its bourgeois and "petit-bourgeois" origins.

There is equally a link between unity in the struggle and the struggle for unity; it denounced the "non-unitarian" nature of the theory which looks on unity as a stage to be attained, once colonialism and reaction have disappeared. It indicated in the same way the "non-militantism" of any unitarian doctrine viewing unity as a cause and not as a beginning.

There can be no revolution in the Arab Homeland without the struggle for unity and no unity is possible without a struggle creating profound upheaval in Arab life. In both cases, the thread linking together these opposite poles is none other than the proletarian masses. This is the vital substance for the outbreak of revolution, the realization of unity and the unitarian, proletarian and liberating conception, as embodied in Arab revolutionary ideology.

During 1956 this new conception of unity became more explicit and its various aspects more clearly defined —often on the occasion of various combats. In a discussion with the students of the Arab Maghreb, "Unity in the Struggle in the Arab Maghreb"[61], the following ideas constantly recurred:

1. "We believe that the fight of the Arab people in every Region is one and the same. This fight must be unified: in other words, it must have the same all-over vision, common aims and a single practical project."

2. "The Arab East has not succeeded in making its struggle against colonialism into a one-hundred per cent popular combat, and its fight has, therefore, in some ways been defective and wavered between gravity, uncer-

61. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th;* 4th Ed.; pp. 251-261.

tainty, haggling and spurious negotiations... This reveals the mistake of, and the risks involved in maintaining the bourgeois class at the head of the national struggle, even if their accession to power appears inevitable at a particular given moment."

3. "Colonialism is not the only factor responsible for maintaining the state of fragmentation; neither is it the only obstacle to unity. But colonialism and major interests stand together and perpetuate this situation."

4. "For nations which have lingered for centuries in a state of under-development, decadence and stagnation, as has our Arab Nation, only strife can enable them to unite and to become fully aware of their personality."

5. "The Arab Nation comes into being wherever the fight is engaged and, particularly, where it is fiercely led, in spite of the perpetual lurking danger of death... The man who braves death is a real man... for it is at this very moment that he can pierce the fallacious nature of all external considerations tribalism and self-interest... Death is stronger than all artifacts. Our Nation exists wherever its sons bear weapons."

6. "Arab revolutionary awareness exacts an all-encompassing vision of both the world and the Arab situations. It requires total organization and a ferocious struggle on a very high level, refusing all half-baked solutions, all semi-sacrifices and, above all, lethargy."

This interview completed the Arab revolutionary ideology's concept with regard to the basic links uniting theory, strategy and tactics, national strife and class-struggle, and also concerning the logic of the bonds between freedom and unity on the one hand and under-development and fragmentation on the other. In the same way, armed combat, in as far as it represents the supreme criterion of the revolutionary dimension, and the theoretical and practical conditions of revo-

lutionary activity are seen to be one and the same thing.

This dialectical connection and the particular stress laid on it was emphasized by Professor Michel 'Aflaq during the workers' festival organized on the occasion of the 1st Congress of the Union of Arab Workers' Syndicates:

"Each forward step the Arab people make towards wresting their freedom and their sovereignty from the hands of foreign oppression, leads them ineluctibly to progress on the road to freedom from injustice and from the underdevelopment which hampers their economy. It equally facilitates the realization of the unity of struggle in the various parts of the Arab Homeland and leads to the unification of these separate parts"[62].

In this speech, emphasis was laid on the proletarian nature of the fight for unity and on the unity of the national class-struggle:

"If there is in our Homeland a class which is above all ready to combat self-interest, to free itself from the consequences of the mentality of division and embody the unity of the Arab cause in thought and reaction, it can only be the Arab working-class, in particular, and the Arab popular proletarian masses, in general. They, in fact, recognize in daily life the flagrant truth that their enemies are the enemies of the Arab Nation."

Professor Michel 'Aflaq reached the conclusion that the proletarian character of strife was the absolute condition of unity:

"Consequently, the fight for Arab unity can only be realistic and fruitful if it merges with that of the Arab

62. Id: *Ibid;* "The Workers' Role in the Realization of Unity and Socialism", p. 314.

masses in the conquest of their natural rights and the raising of their standard of living."

He emphasized in this respect the connection between the nationalist and the social struggle:

"In the fight to lead our single Arab cause to victory, we do not dissociate social and economic factors from the national aspect, because its success can only be assured by the maintenance of unity."

This connection is underlined in Professor Michel 'Aflaq's statements in "Our View of Capitalism and the Class-Struggle"[63]:

"We have expounded the national problem seen as an indivisible whole, even within the Arab Homeland. We have not upheld one aspect to the detriment of others, as did Marxism in upholding the class aspect and the struggle between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Our problem is vaster and deeper—it is the cause of a divided Homeland, wherein a part is still under occupation. This fragmentation is the greatest obstacle to its resurgence. There is also the problem of a Homeland which is, from every point of view under-developed —intellectually, economically— in every sector. We are obliged to undertake the reconstruction of every aspect from zero."

The junction of the national and class aspects can only take place through struggle and perpetual revolution. It is not a restful matter. As Professor 'Aflaq states:

"We must sustain the tension between two antagonistic forces and be careful to avoid national thought degenerating and compromising with criminal class-

63. *Following the Ba'th;* p. 321.

interests; privileged groups must be prevented from showing their adhesion, which is in fact fallacious and perfidious, to the national interest."

During 1956, the internationalist and proletarian horizons of Arab revolutionary ideology began to take clear form in the internationalism of the people's struggle against colonialism. In an article entitled "The role of the Battle of Algiers in our Struggle", Professor Michel 'Aflaq stated:

"The people's interests are in no way contradictory. That of the Arab people of Algeria and the Maghreb is the same as that of Frenchmen struggling against injustice. This is a guarantee of the success of the Arab struggle in the Maghreb. If, in fact, the French government persists in its colonialist policy of exploitation, the interests of the French population are submitted to greater injury than those of the Algerian Arabs. The Arab battle is a positive one, in the real sense of the word, with regard to themselves and the rest of the world, because it confers freedom on Arabs and contributes to the liberation of the people of the countries which colonized us. Moreover, our fight against colonialism will be more genuine, more encompassing and more indicative of our national experience, which is simply that of humanity"[64].

We can, by reference to the abundant political literature of this period, define the following principles and important results:

1. In February 1956, Professor 'Aflaq made a speech at the Beirut Cultural Club concerning "Arab Unity and Socialism", from which we quote a short critical analysis of the various defects which can cause the disintegration

64. Id: *Ibid;* p. 342.

of the link between theory, strategy and tactics in the fight for unity:

"The unification of the Arab Homeland is not the final aim, but a means for the Arab Nation to accomplish its mission in life. This is the point on which we must insist. We realize that, in fact, its application is not always in perfect accordance with strategy and plans elaborated towards this end... We sometimes give priority to other imperatives. Conditions can at times be the cause of imbalance between two necessities which should, in theory, be indivisible and where neither aspect should be favoured at the expense of the other... At one particular moment, conditions may favour the expansion of socialist strife and, at another, the struggle for unity. This may, in the final analysis seem inevitable, for reality differs entirely from theoretical plans. We cannot possibly be in constant control of external conditions and our task is to turn each event to the best possible account... There are, however, errors which do not belong to this category and arise out of the movement itself and out of the inadequate or superficial grasp of its members. Some people think that socialism is an imperative priority and look on unity as a secondary matter. Others believe the reverse... The question of the highest importance is for us to be always on our guard concerning those who invoke specific aims; these can, in fact, be pretexts for protecting private interest, no matter on what scale. Intellectual speculation is not always what it seems... Many of those who possess economic interest in the Arab Homeland show false enthusiasm for Arab unity; but they are really trying to deal a blow at the socialist movement, to sow terror around it and create an obstacle to the realization of unity and to make it out to be a subversive and disbanding factor"[65].

65. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Battle for a Unique Destiny*, pp. 39-40.

In this speech, Professor 'Aflaq laid down the criteria of a sound relationship between the aims expounded by ideology and their present application by progressive stages:

"All our hopes and desires for the Nation in the decades to come must begin, even on a small scale, to take shape now. If militants do not fully realize the values of inqilâb (upheaval), it is difficult to believe that they will change, once in power. Power and authority may, on the contrary, seduce and undermine them, instead of lifting them to a higher level"[66].

In this speech, Professor 'Aflaq also mentioned "The Theory of Stages" in the realization of Arab unity:

"We do not hold that Arab unity can be achieved all at once. It is, on the contrary, natural —even reasonable— that it should take place in stages. We believe in the theory of progressive stages and act in consequence. The union of two or three countries is a stage and we should converge all our efforts on this aim in order that it may come to maturity. It will, in turn, facilitate the transit to a higher level, to a realization of unity of a wider and vaster impact"[67].

2. On April 17th, 1956, the Arab Socialist Ba'th brandished the slogan of "Unity of Syria and Egypt" on the anniversary of the withdrawal of foreign troops from Syrian territory. On April 20th, 1956, the Ba'th newspaper published an article, from which the following is a quotation[68]:

"April 17th has this year assumed even greater im-

66. *The Battle for a Unique Destiny,* p. 41.
67. Id: *Ibid;* p. 46.
68. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part III, p. 171.

portance than an anniversary or a hope... Today a slogan of the utmost importance was born: The fusion of Syria and Egypt is the nucleus of Arab unity and the means to achieve it. The people have decided to realize this union. They wish it to take place totally and at once... Fusion of Egypt and Syria has cast anchor in the hearts of all men. Authorities in power and those of the National Pact Committee are summoned to take full cognizance of this fact and submit it to the will of the people"[69].

The Party had already drawn up a project for the pact in question in which it encouraged the preparation of the realization of union between the two countries, but it encountered opposition from the representatives of reactionary parties.

Revelation of the plans drawn up by the governing class, preparing to bar the road to the union of Syria and Egypt, together with the grouping together of reactionary elements, who were hostile to the project, and the formation of the government, abandoned to one of the poles of reaction on Syrian territory, forced the Party of mass struggle to neutralize this attempt. Professor 'Aflaq wrote an article in this connection in the ninth issue of the Ba'th newspaper entitled "Reactionary Manoeuvres and the People's Awakening"[70].

"For over a year, the policy of those in power is totally inconsequential and reveals a contradiction opposing the social and national reality to that of reactionaries, as it is conceived and proclaimed. For a year, governments, in that they represent people, parties and interests, have become reactionary. But, both in external and Arab relations, they practice a progressive policy.

69. Id: *Ibid;* p. 173.
70. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 200-203.

There is not the slightest shadow of a doubt that the pseudo-policy of freedom was simply a feint to put the people to sleep and avoid suspicion, while they were in fact preparing in secret a fatal blow to the popular movement and planning to destroy all that the people had built up at the price of blood and struggle... The government formed by Lotfi Al-Haffar, with the helping hand of the new reactionary formation, prepared the ground for a lethal blow at the popular movement."

Professor 'Aflaq followed this introduction, which resumed the state of the nationalist class-struggle at the time, by a definition of the Ba'th's position concerning the reactionary project.

"The Arab movement of inqilâb (upheaval) today finds itself at a cross-roads: either the unscrupulousness of its partisans, the faint-heartedness of their revolutionary spirit and organizing ability will lead it to make do with the progressive adumbration announced in certain Regions and the movement will then find itself on the same footing as reactionary governments (following in the wake of progress, but bearing in mind their own class-interests) or else it will benefit from the experience, with its relative degree of success, and raise to a higher level its own awareness, that of the people and the struggle which is inseparable from popular strife; it will equally refuse to be treated on an equal footing with these governments, even if for the time being their objectives coincide".

"The movement would thus continue its preoccupation with long-term objectives and their total, uncompromising realization, even if for the time being it accepted to open a dialogue with them; and it would be compelled to inform the people clearly of the distance still separating them from their aims."

The importance of this victory arises from the fact that it marks a turning point in the life of the Arab revolutionary movement and highlights the appearance of two tendencies. The first inclines towards an adaptation to present conditions and the disrating of the Arab movement of inqilâb to the level of a traditional political party, which would have little hope of survival, and would inevitably lose sight of its objectives, its nature and aspirations. The second tendency retains its revolutionary character and keeps faith with both revolutionary criteria and the original, scientific socialist theory, which reveal all the contradictions of the present stage and offer the means of resolving them.

Indications of adherence to preceding phases then appeared — phases where excessive lust for power introduced external contradictions into the heart of the Arab revolutionary movement. This state of things was to give rise to a critical analysis by Professor Michel 'Aflaq in "The Starting Point" at the beginning of the seventies. In spite of all, the Arab Socialist Ba'th succeeded, internally, in transforming the exigencies of the fusion of Syria and Egypt from the stage of popular revendication to that of an official document, quoted in the government's ministerial statement, in which the Party participated on the basis of a national pact. On July 5th, 1950, moreover, with the approval of the parliamentary majority, the government was mandated to take up discussions with the Syrian Government. The Party's declaration to Parliament of the same date insisted, in the first place, on the fact that this request was "the expression of the will of the Arab Nation everywhere" and not simply an encounter between Syria and Egypt. It also insisted that unity was "a national revendication and the most important progressive revolutionary objective".

It underlined, secondly, the fact that unity "can only

become a reality by accomplishing its liberating, progressive function, for unity cannot be separated from other national aims".

Thirdly, the declaration stated that it was a flagrant mistake to admit only the utility of such a step instead of emphasizing its absolute indispensability. It was not simply a question of progress but of a unique guarantee to prevent going back on realizations and provoke a crisis;it would, on the contrary, give Arabs the necessary strength to face up to the dangers by which they were threatened.

3. Political articles which followed on this declaration drew our attention to the conditions accompanying the success of this event, to the plots we should be called upon to thwart, to the new phase on which the Arab struggle was about to enter and to the importance of this favourable issue on the international scene. All this was to take place in such a way as to reveal an Arab revolutionary doctrine finding its deep, all-encompassing inspiration in the extent and magnitude of this request and our ability to foresee the future clearly:

a) "It is relatively unimportant whether the fusion of Syria and Egypt, for which we are working, be known as a 'union' or 'unity'. Our ardent wish is that its foundations may be sound and capable of evolving. We must take the road which leads to progress and to perfection, and capable of opening out into the realization of Arab unity in its entirety" [71].

b) "Deviations are threatening the first steps of unity: its path is strewn with obstacles and innumerable difficulties. We must expect from colonialism a new understanding and cooperation with Israel, with a view to opposing any new venture towards unity. It is natural

71. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Battle for a Unique Destiny*, p. 67.

that feudalism and reaction within the Nation should be associated to a considerable extent with such opposition"[72].

c) "The latest threat to unity comes from unscrupulous liars, who only approach unity with the intention of undermining its foundations. We can only avoid the dangers of conspiracy and falsification by confiding the creation of unity to the care of the Arab masses and by keeping officialdom completely out of the picture. If the masses are made aware of the real objectives, interests and designs of those who are plotting against unity and if their knowledge gives rise to organized, militant public opinion, they will become the only positive, effective force capable of thwarting conspiracy from within and without."

d) "Arabs are going through a historic phase and are following ineluctibly the true path — that of freedom. This explains the fellow-feeling and support accorded by all free peoples and by democrats the world over to the just Arab cause in the Suez crisis and in the heroic and honourable Arab revolution in Algeria... This phase is a serious one. It enables us to examine our capacity to free ourselves from the yoke of colonialism and also to re-evaluate our situation and our moral and spiritual criteria... It is an important matter to win the fight in our battle against colonialism, without making the slightest modification in our national, humanitarian orientation and without allowing colonialism to corrupt us or leave behind any traces in our minds and hearts. We must win the battle against colonialism by our constancy and the steadiness of our course"[73].

e) "The gravity of our fight against colonialism compels us to raise our struggle to a higher level. The

72. Id: *Ibid;* p. 69.
73. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 89-90.

national dynamic, dominated by resistance to colonialism, is not without default. The social and spiritual revolutions must contribute to its growth towards perfection. While we accord to the current struggle the importance it deserves, we should like to see a profound interaction between the present and the future, and to share in the building of the present with our eyes turned to future horizons and the way which leads us on"[74].

f) "In this fertile moment in the history of our Arab Nation, it is normal for our attention to be concentrated on the weak points and defects which continue to threaten our national life rather than on the strength we have acquired and the progress hitherto made. The Arab people everywhere are called upon to choose — not between victory in the battle or failure before colonialism and Israel, but between the conquest of unity and the safeguard of its 'raison d'être', while continuing to co-operate effectively and to express in strife the full impact of their true Arab nature"[75].

g) "Whether this battle takes place in a climate of relative peace or under arms, the fact remains that the Arabs are at a decisive moment in their history. The Arab people as a whole fully realize that this battle is still only beginning"[76].

h) "If Arabs had to choose between realizing their aims in the shortest possible time, through adherence to the Eastern bloc, or continuing revolution in their own way, completely independent, responding to their conditions and their own requirements and gathering inspiration from their concept of life and Man (even if the realization of their aims were retarded for an indefinite

74. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 100-102.
75. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 106-109.
76. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 122-124.

period), they would choose the longer road, in order to safeguard certain essential values"[77].

i) "As we gain ground in freeing the Nation from foreign occupation, we must pay more and more attention to the ills which corrode us from within and find the appropriate remedies. The most important aspect of our internal structure is our economic situation and it must be saved from all its excruciating paradoxes. We must eliminate class-inequality and suppress exploitation. There are, moreover, spiritual and psychological ills to be dealt with — fanaticism, with all its racial, confessional and tribal aspects, ignorance and so on... We must face up to them as best we can and find suitable remedies"[78].

These are the conclusions drawn from the evolution of Arab revolutionary ideology in 1956.

77. Id: *Ibid;* p. 129.
78. Id: *Ibid;* p. 135.

Chapter IX

Arab Nationalism and Nationalist Theory

Writings about theory were in 1957 centred on finding solutions to a whole series of problems concerning the relation between "Arab nationalism and the nationalist doctrine", "Arab unity and nationalism", and the connection between "Arab experience and the creation of a new world". They made an analysis of the "mass content of the struggle for unity", of the "positive humanitarian content of nationalism" and the revolutionary criteria which formed the basis of Arab policy. These solutions included organizational theory as an integral part of the new nationalist concept and concerned "the connection between the organization and action of inqilâb (upheaval)" and "the Party concept".

The texts which resume the main ideas evinced in these writings are noteworthy for the particular attention they give to the progress made by Arab revolutionary ideology during the period in question, which provoked a national event of the utmost importance —the fusion of 1958.

1. *Arab Nationalism and Nationalist Theory*[79].

Professor Michel 'Aflaq adopted a critical attitude towards the nationalist concept which preceded the birth of Arab revolutionary ideology. According to him, "Arab nationalism in its accepted sense, covers a medley of thoughts, political trends, feelings, residues and both negative and positive deformations which all remove it from the genuine, creative source of its inspiration. It is true that, in its accepted sense, nationalism is sometimes a synonym of fanaticism and expansion, and sometimes a prisoner to the world of race, religion and history. All such meanings, whether of negative or positive bias, create an impediment of variable degree".

The concept of Arab nationalism in relation to revolutionary ideology and to that which links it with national theory can be seen through this criticism in its true light. Arab nationalism is "a fact which compels recognition because it states the primary conditions of all forms of nationalism", whilst nationalist theory "expresses the content of a particular form of nationalism during a specific phase". Nationalist reality is firmly anchored in facts; nationalist theory on the other hand, expresses a reality during one of many stages. The theory of unity, freedom and socialism is only the expression of the current phase in history. As Professor Michel 'Aflaq asserts, it is of little importance that, in the past, the various negative or positive meanings with regard to religion and the historic patrimony contributed to the elaboration of this form of nationalism and merged with it. What counts is the meaning that can be attributed to it today, that of "the resurgence and creation of the Arab future".

79. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th;* 4th Ed. p. 179.

Arab revolutionary ideology can, on this basis, evolve its concept of personified truth and living reality, which cannot lapse into abstraction. It will shed off the stagnation due to backwardness and all the negative consequences of the past, avoid the deviations which arise out of pretended ignorance of the national condition — such as a return to conformity, to blind faith and escapism from real life and direct responsibility to history.

"We shall never voluntarily allow our form of nationalism to disintegrate. It can, on the other hand, only be concretized and perpetuated by our will". Professor 'Aflaq resumed in this sentence the dialectic uniting nationalism and nationalist theory, linking theory with struggle, and also defined the nationalist concept of the Arab revolutionary movement:

"Arabs today have no desire to see their nationalism degenerate into racism, and this arises out of their own experience of injustice... Arabs have no desire to see their nationalism identified with religion, because this is a specific problem, and one which cannot be of help in the unification of the Nation and can, on the contrary, divide an otherwise united group. Arabs today have no desire to see their nationalism in a historic context, for Arab nationalism does not refuse the non-Arab patrimony. The Arab Nation of today falls heir to the patrimony and to the immense riches of the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian and Phoenician civilizations... We believe that nationalism protects us from the danger of resignation to environment and submission to local social conditions. Nationalism is not a stage of struggle destined to disappear with time and leave each Region to recover its own particular personality. Mutual struggle is, on the contrary, the slogan brandished by Arab

nationalism which is in the process of re-birth, for it is the life-giver and the source of nourishment of strife"[80].

2. *The Connection between Unity and Arab Nationalism*

a) Arab unity and Arab nationalism are not the same thing. Arab unity is an element of the content of nationalism during one of many phases. The nationalist theory of Arab doctrine during the present phase is based on unity and socialism. Unity is one of the aims of the Arab Nation in struggle since it awakened to its state of fragmentation. Contrary to the widespread bourgeois concept of unity as a heterogeneous gathering together of the different Regions, the Arab revolutionary movement presents a totally new picture; unity is seen as a revolutionary idea and as revolutionary action. We must take up a new approach and a new form of struggle, hostile to fragmentation and all its artificial consequences mentality, feelings, interests and the politico-social situations existing within every Arab Region. The fight for unity must join with the struggle for freedom and the combat for socialism, for unitarian strife includes freedom and socialism. Arab unity is "the unity of the Arab people and its fight for this aim is a popular struggle", and its future image is "defined by the liberating, humanitarian experiences which animate the combat of the Arab masses".

b) Unity is a revolution which breaks out to end falsehoood and the deformation of truth. It frees unused energies and gives rise to sound reflection. It cannot be minimized to a simple adding operation, because it is not concerned with drawing together healthy elements. It

80. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th*, pp. 179-183.

never dilutes the personality of a given part, but rather consolidates it and confers on it new creativity, new authenticity and a new reality. This transformation is accomplished by giving each element its place, and allowing it full, vibrant participation in the whole.

c) "Situating nationalism and humanism in successive chronological stages is simply a delusion. Instead of affirming that the period of nationalism is condemned to disappear and give way to that of humanism, it would be preferable to state that we are on the verge of the era of 'humanitarian nationalisms', during which nationalism grows into humanism in the measure that it rids itself of fanaticism, introversion and all its other negative aspects."

3. *The Positive Humanitarian Content of Nationalism*

"The question in point is the positive picture we have of nationalism. This corresponds to the degree of maturity attained by the various human communities; it is the fruit of centuries of interaction between individuals and the natural and historic conditions they have known and which have interwoven common spiritual bonds. The most important of these —the transcendant bond— is the cultural link. This was our initial starting-point when we undertook action to bring about the aims of the Arab Nation during this phase... Its inception in no way quarrelled with any other doctrine, laid no claim to its superiority and found no need to deny accusations made against it. Our view of the Nation has nothing negative or emotional about it. We are concerned with its intentional aspect, its nationalist content, and all that offers it the means to elaborate its awakening on sound, efficient foundations.

"We have already stated that the most important action for Arabs at the moment resides in liberation from foreign occupation and all the evils of social injustice, which strangle them and neutralize their strength and energy, liberation from artificial division and all the reactionary impediments which cramp our reasoning powers and prevent their renewal and creativity. In other words, it is primordial for Arabs to concretize the positive content of their nationalism."

4. *The Mass Content of the Struggle for Unity* [81]

Unity is the expression of the fight against colonialism, against tyranny within the Nation, against class-exploitation, under-development and intellectual stagnation. The struggle for victory is an aspect of the all-over Arab combat... It was thought in some quarters that Arab unity was conceived as a conquest, the expedition of a king at the head of victorious armies or of the wealthy classes,... a coercive unit enabling a cast of powerful men to impose their rule over the majority of the people and suffocate the voices crying out for liberty and justice. In fact, thanks to the link established between unity and the people's vital needs, the positive premises of Arab unity are beginning to dawn... It is the popular masses which are today battling for unity and safeguarding its image, for suffering and hardship have long since given them immunity to all forms of fanaticism and sectarianism. As long as it continues to well out of popular struggle and expresses the needs of the masses in combat, we need no longer fear that Arab unity may take a racist, reactionary turn, introverted and isolated from the rest of the human community.

81. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 61-66.

5. *Revolutionary Criteria of Arab Policy*[82]

a) "The present Arab concept is that of inqilâb (upheaval). It believes in the need to introduce a vital transformation in the life of the Arab Nation in every sector on the political and social scene, in mental approach and in morale. Any political picture which stands apart from other sectors is superficial and would give no positive result in our struggle."[83]

b) "The Arab Nation has, for many years, been undergoing the phase of inqilâb, and will continue to do so for many years to come. Among other definitions, inqilâb (upheaval) means that a Nation, distorted from within and agressed from outside, needs to muster together its sound elements, converge its efforts on the essential and take its destiny in hand... In short, the period of inqilâb resembles a permanent state of war, in its true meaning with an all-over plan, clearly-defined objectives, union in action and in combat, the multiplication of effort and production, the delineation of phases and a clear distinction between what is urgent and what can wait"[84].

c) "The coming to power of certain militant elements in Egypt, Syria and Jordan had the merit of contributing to a measure of progress in the direction of freedom and the preparation of unity. We must, however, be careful not to relax our vigilance, for the presence of these elements can create among the people a climate of tranquillity capable of putting them to sleep. The idea of inqilâb would in this way lose its force"[85].

82. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Battle for a Unique Destiny;* pp. 61-142-145-146.
83. Id: *Ibid;* p. 610.
84. Id: *Ibid;* p. 142.
85. Id: *Ibid;* p. 145.

d) "Struggle is not simply a matter of rallying-calls for freedom. It cannot content itself with quarrelling over external policy. Strife bears an intensity which touches the simplest citizen in the smallest village, in both his living conditions and his means of existence. If these militant elements proved incapable of modifying the situation and of mustering the strength to assume the task of freeing and unifying the Arab Homeland, and to surmount the obstacles created by colonialism with intent to prevent this achievement, it would be preferable that they be removed from power; the people would be put on guard and be in a position to maintain their course and their audacity in the fight"[86].

6. *The Arab Experience and the Creation of a New World*[87]

"The people's struggle against colonialism, particularly that of the Arab Nation (which is now the most impressive force in the Middle East), is a deep experience on account of the imprint left by colonialism over the years. The fruits of this experience inevitably contribute to the shape of the world today, for these people are the result of a measure of suffering rarely encountered in the world of the present. We need only evoke our Nation's sufferings in Algeria and Palestine to realize that a nation which has endured such injustice can no longer tolerate the presence of reaction, nor the lust for power, nor conquest, nor racial or religious fanaticism, for they have already been the victims of all these calamities. The experience of Arab and oriental peoples constitutes a real attainment. Their struggle is closely bound up with

86. Id: *Ibid;* p. 146.
87. Id: *Ibid;* p. 176.

the progress made by European peoples. The maintenance of colonialism in our country condemns the peoples of Europe to isolation from the revolutionary current, to foundering in reactionary paralysis and inevitably to renunciation of their civilizing mission."

7. *The Organization and Action of Inqilâb (Upheaval)*[88]

a) "Without an organization entirely dedicated to inqilâb, the militant power and energy of the people are useless."

b) "The organization of inqilâb is a creative task which effects the living meeting-point between the fully-conscious minority and the crushing majority of the people. It enables us to gain precious time, removes the obstacles on the path of the people, totally transforms their lives and creates a new life for the Nation."

c) "The organization is a vital necessity, for it accompanies inqilâb's action. It is part of action's very nature, builds upon its basic idea and will also be its guide. Without it, the militant vanguard cannot assume the weight of the task incumbent upon them."

d) "The organization cannot create out of nothing, for the movement of inqilâb takes its source in the harmony between the minority militating for the accomplishment of inqilâb and the crushing majority of the people. To find its full use, the organization's direction depends on the thought that goes into creating and watching over it. If the organization no longer devolves from creative thought it becomes a purely technical instrument, capable of serving Evil just as much as Good. In truth, the pack of pariah-dogs uses the organization for its own ends."

88. *Following the Ba'th,* pp. 93-98.

e) "If the inqilâb organization is to serve the cause and bring inqilâb into effect, if it is to raise the Nation to the level of creativity and give it its rightful place in the civilized world, if it is to lay claim to true nationalism and to soundness, if it is to last and to succeed, it must build on a foundation of a practical order and learn from the experience acquired by the people in combat. Their experience provides us with rules and landmarks to guide us. Common general knowledge exists, with which no country, no people, can afford to dispense."

f) "The inqilâb organization corresponding to our needs (which we have not yet been able to create) requires our complete dedication to the Party's activity, in order that we may acquire national experience of total strife; this can only take place through constancy, application, long practice, the confrontation with every-day problems, direct contact with the lives of the people and the solutions found to their difficulties."

8. *The Neccesity of the Party*

"You are aware of the quality of traditionalism and superficiality which characterized the action of patriotic movements in the various Arab Regions... We had the feeling that the beginning of a new phase was inevitable, a phase which would show the Arab Nation in a new light and enable it to shed its negative aspects... We had the feeling that a new era would give our Nation the opportunity to face its destiny and brave reality with courage and audacity"[89].

"The inception of the Ba'th responded to the need we felt to find radical, all-encompassing solutions to the problems of the Arab Homeland. We base ourselves on

89. *Following the Ba'th;* pp. 47-50.

certain facts; according to them, our Homeland constitutes a single entity and its people a single Nation. We realize that the departure signal must come from within, free from external influence or any artificial theory. In view of the Nation's present state and the phase of history which it is undergoing, we must choose the path which is right for us and no other. The Ba'th is a nationalist movement; it emerges, in other words, from the very heart of the Nation. It enjoys considerable freedom because its projects and ideas are inspired by the people's needs, because it draws its strength from the support of the great majority of the population and because it is certain of being able to satisfy the Nation's requirements and improve the country's condition. Its resolutions and activities are bolder and more outspoken than those of any other party and it retains its revolutionary aims"[90].

We have quoted above various texts concerning the spirit and the organization which contributed to the enrichment of the nationalist concept out of which Arab revolutionary ideology devolved at this time. Political texts, as their titles indicate, dealt with several themes and, in turn, contributed to clarifying the unitarian theory of the Party, as the following extracts show:

1. *A Struggle Equal to its Aims and its Dangers*[91]

"There are various indications that colonialism has learned the lessons of the crisis it has recently undergone, and it is in the process of trying to resolve its internal conflicts and show a united front to the Arab

90. *Following the Ba'th,* pp. 50-54.
91. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 142-146.

Homeland. We must not be surprised if it comes up this time with even more elaborate projects, reinforced by American political motives. If we are to withstand this new attack, we must pass through an even more important stage and attain a higher degree of maturity in the unification of the Arab struggle. Both in practice and in our awakening, struggle and our faith in the Nation's unity must become one and the same. We must place the problems of Arab struggle above local requirements and difficulties, in order that we may serve the great national cause. All this pre-supposes a shrewd all-encompassing, long-term plan, preoccupied by the immediate present but never losing sight of the future to which we aspire, the delineation of progressive stages and the distinction between what is urgent and what can wait... This new stage can only be reached by putting in question all foundations and current social structures which prove incapable of giving better results than they have in the past."

2. *The Algerian Revolution is a Miracle Brought about by the Arabs during this Century*[92]

"In its revolution, Algeria represents the Arab Nation in all its qualities, as we imagine it in the promising future of our hopes. This revolution, before launching a challenge to colonialism, launched a challenge to the Arabs. It revealed the level best-suited to their infinite possibilities, even if these have not been given full rein nor been allowed to escape from the dungeon in which they were imprisoned. Colonialism is not only at war whith the revolution on Algerian soil but equally in the Suez Canal and in Palestine, because it is fully aware

92. Id: *Ibid;* p. 147.

that the Algerian revolution is an Arab revolution which heightens the quality of the Arab struggle and increases its energies in each and every Region."

3. *The Battle Within and the Battle Without are Two Fronts of the Same War* [93]

"The Arab Nation only approaches humanity by augmenting its sincerity and the determination with which it attacks essential problems. The time has gone when the Arab cause presented only negative aspects, when it was fragile and lacked genuine principles, was eternally on the defensive and called upon to refute endless accusations... The Arab cause today identifies itself with the freedom of Man, which it places above all else. With every day that passes, the Arab people in struggle pay the price exacted with their own blood. The Arab Nation's struggle has reached maturity and equilibrium. It is a single battle, limpid and creative. There is absolutely no difference between our fight against colonialism and that against the ills which corrupt us from within, between action towards our nationalism and freedom and our effective contribution to the freedom of the world. The resistance manifested by the Arab Nation in its fight will not only ensure its progress and everlastingness but will enable it to denounce the monstrous lie represented by Western countries."

4. *"Algeria and Palestine are the Two Flanks of Arab Revolution"* [94]

"By full realization of the nature of the present stage, Arabs will cast off fear, bad conscience and get rid of disseminators of doubt. The rightness of their direction

93. *The Battle for a Unique Destiny;* pp. 154-157.
94. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 159-164.

will give them increasing confidence in themselves and greater determination.

"The nature of the phase they are undergoing is becoming evident through two serious phenomena —the Algerian and Palestinian catastrophes. The Arab struggle, which has reached a determinating revolutionary level and the Arab future, with its general humanitarian principles, spring from these two wounds which stain the heart of the Arab Nation— Algeria and Palestine. Here the Arabs have known the deepest human suffering. From this point onwards, the face of our future struggle is made clear. The Algerian revolution made such a positive contribution that it imposed respect on all free men of the world. In Palestine, colonialists and Zionists came to an agreement to expatriate our people and uproot them from their lands. They claimed, and continue to claim, that Israel was born to go on living, but the Arab people replied: Israel is condemned to disappear, and with it colonialism."

5. *"Only One Road Leads to Unity"*[95]

"Confusion and ambiguity can no longer be tolerated with regard to unity and the way to attaining it. Unity has become a self-evident fact, synonymous with freedom, for colonialism fears it beyond all else. Unity has also become synonymous with progressivism within the Nation, for reaction joins with colonialism to stem the revendications of the people... wherever fragmentation, colonialism, tyranny and reaction are to be found. Iraq, which was the first country to hoist the flag of Arab unity, has become completely isolated and has withdrawn into itself. This is the fault of the reactionary

95. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 165-169.

class. The reactionary monarchy in Jordan brought the country to disaster just when it was on the point of bringing about unity with Syria and Egypt. The reaction in Saudi Arabia was not, in fact, hostile to unity alone, but also used its influence and commercial supremacy to combat unity throughout Arab territory... We can thus see that unity is not a revendication to be isolated from a real situation and essential social conditions, but is rather itself the expression of such conditions. Given the internal and external situation of the Arab Nation, unity is faced with a single path that of freedom, progress, political and social strife, which is the path of the Arab masses."

6. *Towards an Arab Awakening to Inqilâb (Upheaval)*[96]

"During the last few years, the Arab Nation has assuredly made appreciable progress on the path of revolution and resurgence... The primary cause of this advance —and the most important— is the appearance of a new concept of Arab nationalist action which, even if not yet reaching the level of its theory in clarity, in its relation to other theories and its over-all dimension, does in fact possess the necessary minimun to achieve the above. We can reduce this new theory to two essential ideas. It must, in the first place, be based on the people, seen as the only efficacious revolutionary force... The Arab cause must, in the second place, be viewed as a well-constructed, indivisible whole... The rising Arab movement must, moreover, be worthy of its doctrine; this is a vital necessity, on which the soundness of our future depends. Even if it is incapable of forging the

96. *The Battle for a Unique Destiny;* pp. 170-172.

future, theory, by introducing new elements into strife —such as urge and planification and the preparation of adequate conditions— makes an important contribution to its creation. It must in no way prohibit adaptation to new and unexpected conditions, but must, on the contrary, in spite of its elasticity and capacity for adaptation, guarantee the continuity of political orientation. The existence of objective rules and sound foundations, readily accessible to the greatest number of simple men is indispensable, for they will thus be in a position to watch over the experiences of the people in combat and will be able to gauge the measure of progress made and the rectitude of the path. An instrument will be created for the people to test themselves and, at the same time, test their leaders."

7. *"The Fusion of Egypt and Syria Forfifies Revolutionary Orientation and Guarantees its Lastingness"* [97]

"The Arab Nation provides the most fertile and favourable conditions in the world today for the outbreak of revolution; here revolution would reveal the full intensity of the Nation's suffering and its internal and external contradictions... We have always looked on Arab unity as a revolutionary aim, even the most revolutionary of aims, particularly with the adjunct of our popular concept, inspired by the very nature of the phase in history the Nation is undergoing. This enables us to kill two birds with a stone — to free ourselves from colonialism and from reaction at one and the same time. We have seen the realizations of pseudo-union (the aim

97. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 177-187.

of which was rather to put the people to sleep than to help it to adhere to concrete realizations) suffer an affront and fall into an ever greater measure of decadence as the concept of popular unity became more evident and more important. For the first time, we feel that one of our cardinal national aims is out of danger. Its imminent realization in a sound national form has become ineluctible, and hostile external forces can no longer prevent it, now that it has become the property of the popular forces of Egypt and Syria."

8. *"Positive Non-Alignment"* [98]

"The Ba'th movement has from the beginning, appealed for neutrality. By the force of time and local and international events, non-alignment has acquired a positive form, as can now be observed among many Asian and African peoples. This form of neutrality does not find its only justification in political and economic campaigns, but can rather be explained by our attitude towards freedom and the international politico-ideological conflict to which we are witness... The adoption of non-alignment policy by a vast popular front throughout the world indicates a refusal of belligerency and the recognition of the need for peace. The sucess of non-alignment policy so far is an explicit sign of cardinal political blunders and the great danger inherent in a policy of alignment and the narrow horizons of shared ideology. Positive non-alignment policy denotes aspiration to a new, general attitude, transcending the opposition of socialism to capitalism and centring itself on the problems of humanity and international relations, more than was evident in the past. Is it possible to

98. *Following the Ba'th;* 4th Ed. pp. 346-351.

benefit from all the evolutions and transformations which have taken place since the cold war, and particularly since the crystallization of the division of, and conflict between, the Eastern and Western blocs? Such an attitude presupposes a degree of objectivity towards all ideologies in order that all theories and doctrines and their consequent plans and methods, can be re-examined... If non-alignment policy is to be fully understood, it must be adapted to the natural stages necessary for the development of the national struggle from every aspect. If duty compels us to mobilize all available forces to drive out colonialism and realize socialism as rapidly as possible, this urgent necessity must nevertheless avoid becoming an end in itself; we must not pay the price of it by adhering to the Eastern bloc or neglect the need for the people's maturation in strife, for they are alone capable of furnishing the means to guarantee our acquisitions. Positive non-alignment is an attitude of a civilizing dimension, and is both new and creative. It tolerates neither blind fanaticism for any particular doctrine nor blind opposition to any given regime or philosophy. Its task is to avoid the outbreak of a conflict between democracy, in its widest accepted sense, and social justice."

9. *Arab Nationalism and Freedom Policy*[99]

"Arab nationalism has reached such a degree of maturity that we need no longer fear for it. It can now open out to the different ideological currents and give and take with them. Unexpectedly, such an opening out nourishes and strengthens it and helps it to define its own particular characteristics. There is no longer any

99. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part III, pp. 266-267.

reason —as was the case ten or twenty years ago— to fear that its life could be endangered by other ideological conquests. This is today no longer justified. We must bear in mind that every time fear is expressed about Arab nationalism being confronted with Communist ideological propaganda, the real objective is, in fact, the invention of a pretext to alter the direction of Arab freedom-policy which has so far been adopted... It is important, in this connection, to note those who fear that our nationalism and ideology may fall under the influence of triumphant Communist ideology and colonialist propaganda... The greatest danger which challenges our ideology and nationalism comes from colonialist conspiracies which are unknown to us, but represent a threat to the Nation's existence. The real peril for nationalism does not arise out of intellectual contact with Communist ideology but from colonialism and the diverse means it uses to ensure that freedom policy should, in certain Arab Regions, be mixed with apprehension of the international Communist menace... Arab nationalism today finds itself confronted with a new colonialist danger which can be perceived in American policy; here, there is no hesitation to use force, corruption of collusion. With intent to strike a blow at free Arab nationalism, the United States exaggerates the danger of Communism's intellectual conquests, in the hope of making us forget the dangers of colonialism itself and of Israel."

10. *"Let us Unify the High Command of the Arab Struggle"*[100]

"On account of the unlimited means at the disposal of the United States and the consequent pressure they

100. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part III, pp. 269-273.

can bring to bear and the degree of corruption they can exert, colonialism has confided to them the leadership of their intensified campaign. This state of things obliges us to elaborate a new concept and new preparations which will be equal to the danger confronting us. Political co-ordination so far realized between certain Regions in struggle is no longer adequate, and should, in fact, be aimed at the total political unification of liberated Regions. The unification of the high command of popular strife throughout the Arab Homeland is equally indispensable. The sound, internal front we need necessitates a complete breakaway from practices of the past, which confined themselves to making a distinction betwen the wide majority and the small clan of colonialist henchmen. While the Arab freedom movement remains sincere and decided, we must make the most of it and make a break with this minority. As long as it retains its genuine, revolutionary character and aspires to building the future on just and healthy foundations, the Arab freedom movement must accept this ideological rupture with regard to social and spiritual values, even if all the doctrines in question accord in serving the same vital, decisive cause — the freeing of the Homeland. The cardinal criterion which must be our guide and enable us to deepen the Party's existence compels us to define first priorities and so avoid giving importance to any aim which is not an immediate imperative and might therefore, become an eventual cause for disagreement. We must, secondly, closely co-ordinate national objectives during this stage and so avoid ambiguity and motives for dispute, contradiction or backsliding. This is a stage for national liberation in every Region of the Arab Homeland."

11. *"The Arab Struggle against Colonialism and Zionism"* [101]

"This is, above all, a stage for national liberation. This means that the crushing majority is ready to participate in the struggle and find a common ground of understanding, in spite of differences of opinion and interest, even if the hour has not yet struck for the realization of all-over Arab unity and the establishment of a perfect socialist system. There are two indispensable conditions for this understanding with regard to liberation, if it is to be genuine and produce a decisive result. We must make practical progress towards unity and gradually undertake agrarian reforms. The phase of liberation is one of revolution; but it is just the brink of revolution and no way represents the totality... Colonialism and Zionism are the declared enemies of the Arab freedom movement. We see them in two incomplete and distorted guises. The Rightwing front attacks Israel tooth and nail to cover up the truth of colonialism. The opposite faction puts Israel and colonialism into the same bag.

"Israel, for us, constitutes a base for colonialism, but this does not cover all aspects of the matter. It is a fact that Israel embodies the power of international Zionism, which is itself a colonialist movement, but it is also an independent movement capable of using colonialism in turn for its own advantage. Our struggle against colonialism must be duplicated by a struggle against Zionism... If we do not get down to facing our political problems and realizing unity in a revolutionary method and spirit in conformity with inqilâb (upheaval), the solution to the problem of Israel will not only be deferred but will give this entity the opportunity to consolidate its

101. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 278-283.

integrity in such a way that it will be difficult, well-nigh impossible, to make an end to this danger."

12. *"The Major Historic Step"*[102]

"As long as they are united in a single fight, the two countries must find and understanding. The policy of Arab liberation has, on this basis, expressed the hopes of the Arab people and their aspirations for freedom... for unity and progress, and for the consecration of unity in the struggle they are enduring towards the realization of these objectives... We are today making a major historic step, not only in the lives of two Arab countries but in the lives of all Arab peoples. We refer to the fusion of Egypt and Syria, which is the result of the struggle of both countries in their heroic fight for liberty in the face of Israel and colonialism. The Arab people in Egypt and Syria consider this fusion as a confirmation of their victories and a base from which they can protect their existence and freedom and attain their objectives freedom, over-all unity and a socialist society."

According to the political and theoretic writings which have recorded cardinal ideas and observations, it appears that Arab revolutionary ideology has, by endowing it with a greater measure of precision and clarity, contributed to the evolution of the nationalist unitarian concept from which it devolved.

The following are the stands which have given form to new principles: the recognition of the real bonds

102. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part III, pp. 295-297.

between colonialism and Zionism, the co-ordination of nationalist strategy and theory, the highlighting of the need for an opening towards Marxism, the clarification of the positive ideological content of non-alignment and the modification of the concept of international evolution seen as a result of neutrality, the revolutionary nature of Egypt and Syria's step towards unity, the definition of our new concept of nationalist action and the revolutionary path to Arab unity, the delimitation of the present phase and the determining of its nature, insistance on the international dimension of the Arab Nation's struggle, confirmation of the impossibility of dissociating struggle, internally and externally, together with a critical attitude towards the stage reached by the Arab struggle... Theoretic writings and the objective evolution observed during this period enabled these stands to develop fully. By bringing to an end the legend of the "fatality of fragmentation" and emerging into a new era, born with the fusion of 1958 —that of Arab unity— we have reached a critical moment in the life of the Arab Nation.

Chapter X

Arab Revolutionary Ideology and the Experience of Unity

1958, which saw the establishment of the first unitarian experience in Arab contemporary life was a critical moment between two phases, that preceding and that following the fusion. The new phase, while demonstrating practically the organic, living interaction between the Arab masses throughout national territory and Arab revolutionary thought calling for unity, freedom and socialism, revealed the deficiency of the relation between unitarian theory, strategy and tactics. The instrument proved unequal to its theory. Thus from the very beginning, the experience was deprived of the intimate connection relating an objective to the political, organizational, economic and social context in which it was elaborated.

The Arab revolutionary movement is distinguished by the concept of unity from which it devolves and which it defined at the start, together with the criteria to be respected in applying methods of unification. It was these criteria which enabled it to measure the Algerian revolution and realize the reality of the Arab revolution during this new phase.

We note two articles dated 20th and 22nd February, 1958, in Professor Michel 'Aflaq's work "Following the

Ba'th", entitled "The Fusion of Syria and Egypt" and "Unity is a Historic Revolution", in which the author defined the broad outlines of this new experience, as conceived by the Arab revolutionary movement[103].

1. "Arabs of the United Arab Republic have realized unity through their own struggle. This is, however, only a first step."

2. "Over the years, we have never for an instant doubted that unity would leave behind the stage of potentiality and become a practical fact. We have always believed struggle to be both the means and the aim... In struggle, unity becomes a vibrant reality and illusions, obstacles and personal interests all dissolve and enable the Nation's sons to accomplish their noble, historic mission."

3. "Now that the Arabs have made this historic step and realized the fusion of Egypt and Syria, the time has come to turn our eyes towards our brothers in Algeria, for they have to a great extent participated in its accomplishment."

4. "If this republic were not to continue its efforts and to find itself isolated, if it were to fail in the realization of its national duties, it's very existence would be endangered."

5. "Even if it is the result of a long struggle and constitutes the nucleus, the potential seed of revolutions to come, all that the Arabs have brought about during this period is the fruit of a revolution which is only just beginning... We must give it all our attention and separate straightforward elements from the complex. All beginnings are difficult and fraught with danger. It is our sacred duty to conserve all that has been gained by this historic advance."

103. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th;* pp. 271-275.

From the above, it is possible to define the Arab revolutionary movement's attitude to the fusion of 1958. It represents a "step forward", the value of which can be gauged by the progress made on the road to revolution. It is the "fruit" of the Arab struggle throughout their territory and of its growing maturity; this provided the means to attain the stage of unified planification on the all-over scale of the Arab Nation. Its "merit" was the consolidation of unity in the struggle within the Arab Homeland and attainment of the stage of global planification in the fight. A common destiny binds together unity and the Arab revolutionary movement. Its durability depends on its capacity to go on progressing.

True unity is thus seen as a permanent revolution, whithout respite, tolerating neither stagnation nor withdrawal.

In Professor 'Aflaq's work "The Battle for a Unique Destiny", we find an article dated April 4th, 1958, entitled "The Algerian Revolution and a Surprising Demonstration of the Value of Arabism", in which he defined the dialectical relationship of unity to revolution. He explained that ordinary evolution, in the framework of fragmentation and reformism, suited colonialism and provided no opportunity for the outbreak of a genuine revolution a revolution capable of galvanizing the Arabs, of an intensity beyond all hopes, such as to prevent colonialism from stifling or controlling it or conspiring against it. The article shows, moreover, that unity, in its new, revolutionary sense, is the secret of the strength and dimension of the Arab revolution. It provides the guarantee of its durability and enables it to conserve its breadth and energy. Professor 'Aflaq crystallized this new concept of unity as follows[104]:

"Unity is the axis around which our revolution revol-

104. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Battle for a Unique Destiny*, p. 185.

ves, the heart which feeds it and the horizon from which it draws its inspiration. It protects us against all the dangers of an inferior intellectual level and fallibility in action. It sweeps away the superficiality and artificiality of the solutions with which we try to solve our problems. The idea of unity opens wide the door to radical, decisive solutions in every Arab Region, no matter whether they belong to the domain of the fight for freedom, independence, progress or social revolution. It forces every Arab Region to contribute to the responsibilities of the whole Arab Nation. The revolution set in motion by the fusion can be seen in the upsurge it gives to Arab unity; it makes it possible for militants to endure acute suffering and to brave the greatest danger. It is clear that unity leads to revolution and revolution to unity."

The article entitled "Unity is at the Same Time an Arab and a World Revolution and guarantees the Durability of our Revolution" in Part III of "The Ba'th's Struggle", completes the Arab revolutionary movement's picture of the fusion of 1958 and underlines the conditions necessary for its safeguard and evolution[105].

"This historic step which has enabled Arabs to realize their dream has for many years been a source of inspiration for militant thought and a reality for the devoted vanguard... They have discovered unity at the end of the road because they placed it there from the very beginning. They knew that unity could not take place by itself, but required, on the contrary, organization, creativity and continuous strife... Our United Arab Republic is the daughter of our people's revolution and the fruit of its struggle throughout Arab Regions. It must be the starting-point of revolution in every corner of the Arab Homeland and must provide its nourish-

105. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part III, pp. 316-317.

ment. The principle of the Arab Nation's unity, the unity of its cause and struggle is the only guarantee of its durability and development."

These are the terms in which the Arab revolutionary movement defined the criteria for success or failure, the satisfactory or disastrous orientation of this historic step. Everything depended on the revolutionary bearing of the experience and the deep recognition of its exigencies and the level of strife capable of preserving it, guaranteeing its development and total success.

We can, on this basis, disengage a theoretical and general scientific law which can help us to foresee the future. Since the experience of union has satisfied subjective and objective needs by ensuring the revolution's immortality in the Arab Homeland, it cannot fail to consolidate the factors of its success and prove its ability to conquer fragmentation definitively and eliminate class differences and colonialist, Zionist and reactionary projects. Unity is equivalent to an acceleration on the path of head-on confrontation with the main contradictions of the Arab condition. In other words, it is an open war against fragmentation-factors, class-exploitation, colonialist repression, Zionist occupation and reactionary conspiracies. Without this head-on battle, there could be no decisive unity, for it would then be isolated from the masses, superficial in nature, destined to distort and falsify the idea of unity from within and lead the masses to doubt themselves and their aims.

The only condition in which unitary experience can succeed is a state of permanent revolution: this would introduce a deep change in the lives of the Arab people on an intellectual, economic, social and political plane; it would bind together in a vibrant way the life of the individual, of generations and the Arab masses, with the

Nation's fight to realize total unity, the conquest of its freedom and the elimination of every last trace of the presence of imperialism, Zionism and the reaction.

Every time conditions are favourable to revolution in the Arab Homeland, every time the Arabs come close to unity, every time unity is revealed to be revolutionary, unity grows and shows itself to be capable of developing into a new way of life and acceding to a higher level, characterized by militantism and greater humanism.

Towards the middle of March 1958, the Party's internal magazine ("The Socialist"), published a special issue in Irak on unity, in which an analytical comparison was made between the new Arab Republic and the reactionary "Arab union" between Jordan and Irak, as a response to the fusion of that year. Here, "The Socialist" clearly defined the path of Arab unity in accordance with Arab revolutionary ideology[106]:

"The great danger for Arab unity is building on a reactionary, colonialist foundation, based on hatred. Such a state of things could shape its future in a definitive manner and oppose it to the cause of the Arab people and that of others. Such an error would sow internal doubts throughout the nationalist cause. It is, therefore, inexact to say that the United Arab Republic is a way to unity and that "Arab union" stands for a different direction and a different path. Unity is not a two-way track. One is progressive and the other reactionary, and reaction is the total negation of Arab nationalism."

According to the Arab revolutionary movement, reactionary unity is an impossibility. There can be no common denominator between reaction and Arab nationalism, for each is the negation of the other. Arab

106. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part III, pp. 261-267.

nationalism means struggle against fragmentation and reaction. The latter is opposed to the material interests of socialist unity, which is simply a task of national and class liberation.

In another article entitled "The Arab Republic and its National Responsibilities", "The Socialist", in a special issue, made an evaluation of the experience of unity and evinced several criticisms[107]:

"Heavy responsibilities weigh on the shoulders of the Arab Republic. The people hunger to see its rising country fulfil its hopes and desires and satisfy all the imperatives which will enable it to assume the leadership of the people's freedom movement and the unity of the Arab Nation...

"The anniversary of the United Arab Republic must enjoy a new esteem, different from all that preceded its inception. The Republic in no way resembles any other Arab Region; it is a completely new phenomenon with new significance. It is the first nucleus of unity we can claim... This new image of the Republic must leave its mark on the thoughts and projects of popular movements within the Arab Nation and the leaders of the Republic... The United Arab Republic must assume the greater part of the load to help the Arab freedom movement to go forward on the path of global unity."

In the light of this concept and these fundamental ideas, which had not yet reached the stage of practical application, it is evident that the theory of unity was not lacking in clarity. What was lacking was understanding of its bearing, and the cause of this was an inability to link theory and strategy, stage by stage. Writings in 1959 —the end of the fifties— underlined the necessity for the Arab revolutionary movement to remain loyal to the

107. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 269-270.

strategy of the struggle in order to protect the experience of unity, define its dimension and offer useful criticism concerning the errors of the unitarian regime.

In a speech made in Cairo on April 22nd, 1959, Professor Michel 'Aflaq once again stated the revolutionary criteria arising out of the scientific concept of unity, which in turn devolved from understanding and from an analysis of all the contradictions of the Arab condition[108].

"The revolution in which the Arabs depend entirely on their own resources is the fight for unity, whereas that for freedom and for social revolution can benefit from assistance from other forces (the century's trend towards the weakening of colonialism and the progress recorded by socialist regimes all over the world). Unity, however, is an even more difficult objective to attain because it exacts, on the behalf of every Arab, personal effort, perspicacity and sacrifice. Israel came into being to make the realization of unity an even more arduous matter. There are powerful interests in the world which are opposed to unity, because it represents a danger for them; there are, equally, hostile interests within the Homeland which are opposed to unity. Some of these set themselves up as open enemies of unity, without gaining any particular advantage from their attitude. In our Homeland, there are still conditions, states and factors which prevent the adherence to unity by the entire population and which slow down the advent of favourable conditions for our belief in unity."

Professor 'Aflaq, through his critical view of all that had been realized so far and all that was currently taking place, defined the new strategy for unitarian action[109]:

108. Michel 'Aflaq: *Following the Ba'th,* pp. 285-286.
109. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 287-290.

"Despite the intellectual advance in Arab nationalist thought in theory and action during the last few years, and despite the clarity of its varied aspects, many factors still remain confused and obscure, with the result that thousands —even hundreds of thousands— of the sons of the Arab people are uninvolved in the fight. We can go as far as saying that the partisans, the apostles of unity and all those working towards its realization have failed in their task. This is both a mistake and a defect. For unity to be able to rise up and face its enemies, we must win over to our cause, as quickly as possible, all those who have nothing to gain by setting themselves up as the foes of unity, gain their support, bring them into the ranks of its partisans, spur them on to take their place as warriors in the name of unity... It is our duty to make progressivism of Arab unity into a decisive, unequivocal factor, as sharp as a sword-blade, to help us win over the entire Arab people to our cause. We must realize that the support of the people is the means to rid ourselves once and for all of reactionaries, exploiters and feudalists. We must have no hesitation about adopting the revolutionary path and a decisive, trenchant method. The confusion, uncertainty and sentimentality which still colour our idea of nationalism and unity are partly responsible for this state of things. It is intolerable that we should neglect the weaknesses that hinder our development. It is better to bring them out into the open than to smother them in silence. We must exact closer self-criticism and be ever-ready to adjust our views when we find errors in our work or plans."

The last phrase reflects the true attitude of the Arab revolutionary movement (which was beginning to take form) concerning its revolutionary concept of unity and authority in power. The latter was intent on diminishing the level of the experience in such a way as to endanger

its future, destroy its hopes and cast aspersions on the nationalist concept, which translated the indomitable trend of the masses, out of which it came into being. The revolutionary movement found itself faced with a dual responsibility. It was, on the one hand, responsible for its concepts and its revolutionary unitarian criteria, which it was obliged to define; in this connection, it was constrained to adopt a clear, critical attitude concerning the errors and deviations which separated the experience of unity from these criteria and from the level required. It had, on the other hand, to assume the responsibility of protecting the experience; it had to help it to progress inwardly, avoid leaving a free hand to its enemies and letting them exploit blunders made during the experience of union.

The Third National Congress was held between August 27th and September 1st, 1959, to confirm this formula. On October 10th, the National Office proclaimed the following political declaration:

"In collaboration with the revolutionary command in Egypt, the Ba'th Party has contributed to the creation of the United Arab Republic, in accordance with the will of millions of citizens in Syria, Egypt and elsewhere. It has worked for the consolidation of this Republic and for its protection. It must, moreover, in the framework of its heavy responsibilities, consolidate its foundations, defend and collaborate closely with those in power, if it is to bring about the objectives of the Arab people and fulfil its mission"[110].

It is for this reason that the criticism made by the Arab revolutionary movement of the errors which deformed the progressive revolutionary mass image of the path to unity retained its positive nature and its desire to

110. *The Ba'th's Struggle;* Part IV, p. 105.

make adjustments internally. The Lebanese newspaper "The Press", was among the mouthpieces which expressed this positive critical attitude and the desire to rectify mistakes.

This paper published an article entitled "The Revolutionary Character of Arab Nationalism", (Number 168), in which it attempted, by accentuating correct ideas, to retort to adverse elements which had already begun to monopolize methods for diffusing information. It emphasized the revolutionary formula required by the logic of nationalist action, strife and Arab revolutionary strategy during this particular phase. It denounced attempts and conspiracies aimed at bursting asunder the bonds uniting the two revolutionary forces those which conducted the struggle for unity and those which brought about the fusion of Egypt and Syria; the Ba'th Party and the Egyptian revolution. Arab nationalism, according to this article, "is not of recent date; it is nobody's personal property; it was invented neither by a person nor a party... In order to lead nationalism from the stage of intimate feelings to that of an objective reality, spiritual and organizational conditions have to lend themselves fully to the event. This implies an all-encompassing theory, capable of laying the scientific revolutionary foundations of Arab society... Unification of the Arab people, who were dispersed throughout a myriad of small, poverty-stricken countries, requires more than the recitation of a few poetic stanzas or impassioned rallying-calls. It needs an organization capable of defining the means to achieve the aims delineated by doctrine... The Arab march towards unity depends on the existence of a loyal general staff and its faith in the Arab revolutionary doctrine and in the people's organization, as a means for attaining specifi objectives... Through action in the framework of this doctrine, (which adds its full, progressive popular meaning to nation-

alism), and this organization, (which gives doctrine its efficacity), we reap the fruits of popular struggle. Neglect for the efficiency of popular organization and sticking to the impassioned sentimentality of a disorganized people could be a primary cause of an eventual catastrophe for the Arab revolutionary movement"[111].

These are the broad outlines of the unitarian concept, from which Arab revolutionary ideology devolved, during the phase covered by the fifties and which culminated in a statement circulated in the confidential bulletin issued by the Secretary-General to members in March 1959. Here we read[112]:

1. "The historic experience has clearly shown that free Arab nationalism is the principle motor-force animating the heroic struggle in which our people are engaged throughout the territory of the Arab Homeland for freedom from colonialism and for unity... The basis of Arab nationalism is progressive; its approach to the social question is radical, and its vision of the world marked by open-mindedness and humanism."

2. "Historically speaking, following on the establishment of the United Arab Republic, the idea of unity only triumphed after the total failure of the experience of fragmentation, just as much in the maintenance of regional independence as in the realization of marked progress and increased stability in the lives of the people, and even in the defence of the right to existence — as in Palestine and Alexandretta..."

3. "Nationalism, consequently, as it stands today and in so far as it is a theoretical and political movement, indicates the criteria which enable us to measure the justness or incorrectness, the sucess of failure of political evo-

111. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 84-87.
112. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 72-83.

lution and the theoretical solutions presented to us..."

4. "The current revolutionary stage may be vitiated if we neglect essential truths with regard to evolution, as defined by Arab nationalism (and which it is trying to realize)."

What are these criteria and what are the essential truths?

The study under survey continued its commentary on the principal characteristics of the Arab struggle after the experience of unity, and furnished replies to the above questions[113]:

5. "Unity is itself a revolution. Its realization exacts that we go beyond local considerations and interests connected with fragmentation and eliminate all traces of it from our minds and culture..."

Two different types of consequence have resulted from revolution. On the one hand, reactionary and colonialist forces are attacking unity with ferocity and resolution because their interests are in flagrant contradiction with it. On the other hand, there are disagreements which arise out of fragmentation.

As far as the latter type is concerned, an all-over vision capable of seeing beyond the fact of fragmentation and its related interests is necessary, together with a resolutely revolutionary attitude, capable or creating favourable conditions for real unity. The rule defining the criteria connected with the conditions which gave rise to the political evolution recorded by free Arab nationalism is then posited:

6. "Our Party's all-over vision has enabled us to delineate the path which will end in the accomplishment of Arab resurgence — the path of popular struggle."

"This great revendication which is unity, will take place, on condition that we turn to the people, that we

113. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 79-80.

join their ranks and fight with ferocity and ardour and co-ordinate our efforts and become equal to the difficulties and obstacles ahead."

We can, in the light of the above, perceive the main characteristics of this revolutionary theory which saw in the fusion of Egypt and Syria a new experiment in history of immense intellectual, organizational and political impact. The doctrine foresaw the mobilization of all the extraordinary means of which the new State disposed; these were to be placed at the service of popular struggle, with the intention of leading unity, freedom and progress to their ultimate goal, and adapting the condition of daily political life to the strategic exigencies of the present stage of the Arab revolution. It ardently desired to deepen the idea of Arab unity, to improve the means at its disposal, widen its horizons of struggle, construct a sound economic foundation, raise the level of its projects and its resistance to imperialist, Zionist and reactionary plans, and create a favourable revolutionary climate for unity, capable of eliminating definitively the mental attitude of fragmentation. The doctrine brought us into intimate contact with the anti-patriotic, reactionary nature of fragmentation, despite the poor imitation of progressivism adopted by its partisans. It denounced the forces at the disposal of the class which took advantage of the state of fragmentation and forged out of it an instrument with which to oppose the Arab revolution, annihilate the power of the masses, strangle their revolutionary energies and conspire against them.

The distance separating this revolutionary vision and the state of mind and predominant methods used by those in power, who were content to brandish empty slogans with regard to unity, began to be seen more clearly. At the same time, the unitarian climate, the trend of the masses and the revolutionary dispositions

which accompanied the birth of unity dissolved and returned to a state of fragmentation and dislocation.

This breach later reached the outside limit of contradiction, for authorities in power continued to enclose the spiritual, organizational and revolutionary dimension of unity within the circumscribed phraseology of information, created new paradoxes as each day passed and, finally, aggravated fragmentation in the name of unity. Instead of unifying the worker and agricultural sectors of the masses and canalizing their production in a revolutionary manner, instead of converging its attention on revolutionary spirit and applying itself to evolving a climate favourable to creativity, bureaucracy —whit its unjustified cultural superiority complex— annihilated freedom and killed initiative. They suffocated any voice raised in criticism and invented new production sectors and methods of falsification and torture to lead the masses astray, weaken unity and empty it of its progressive, popular content.

This breach became the main theme of Arab revolutionary thought in the following stage of the sixties, during which the military upper class began to reap the fruits of its "unitarian" regionalism, of its "scientific revolutionary" under-development, its "popular democratic" tyranny, its "revolutionary" grandiloquence and "sagging" courage. Thus the march towards unity and socialism began to founder and come under castigation.

In these conditions, ideology and the Arab revolutionary movement had no alternative but to launch into self-criticism of a profound nature, on both a theoretical and practical plane. This began in 1960 and reached its culmination during the period following the catastrophe of June 1967. At the same time, the Arab revolution entered a stage of confrontation aimed at bringing armed combat to an end, imposing defeatist solutions and liquidating the cause of Palestine.

Part Four

Chapter XI

The Sixties: The Contradiction between Unity and the State

In the political sphere, we can consider the sixties as a stage of revisions which did not reach maturity. It is characterized by a reactive attitude towards the mistakes and the ambiguity of the unitarian experience which ended in breakdown. This attitude continued to gnaw away at the very body of the Arab revolution until the June defeat. Conspiracies began to be clearly formed against the future of the Arab revolution, through the attempts to liquidate the Palestinian cause on an international scale.

All of this took place in the political sphere, both official and superficial, expressing the frame of mind and the interests of the ruling class, itself stemming from the middle class and lower middle class.

In the ideological sphere, this first unitarian experience has been rich in the valuable lessons which can be learnt from it. And Arab revolutionary ideology has tried to draw out those elements which would allow it to go forward, deepening and enriching its revolutionary nationalist ideas. By positively criticising the mistakes made during this experience, through self-criticism on the part of the Arab revolutionary movement, by refusing secession, by making known the repercussions and

the dangers, and by struggling for the renewal of the unitarian fight, this ideology has been able to take stock of the real distance which separated Arab revolutionary thinking from its practical application in reality during this stage. It has been able to sift out the kinds of contradictions which oppose its thinking to the political recipes and plans aimed at distorting and conspiring against it; these recipes and plans forming a part of those schemes which had as a target the Arab revolution in particular and the revolutionary movement in general.

In 1960, under the title "The Historical Role of the Ba'thist Movement"[114], Professor Michel 'Aflaq summarises the theoretical and practical contribution of the Arab revolutionary movement to the contemporary Arab struggle, within the framework of a sincere self-criticism:

"The Ba'thist movement constitutes a new given in the modern life of Arabs, both in the field of theory and also in that of action, in spite of the mistakes which it has committed and which could occur again."

But, what then is the determining factor in the eyes of Professor Michel 'Aflaq?

1. "It is the first serious attempt to give an impulse to the revolutionary forces in the Arab homeland, in order to reach Arab goals by way of an independent Arab path."
2. "The Arab Nation experienced a revolutionary stage well before the appearence of our movement. But the latter has tried to give the Arab revolution a unified form, both logical and global, and to bring it into this century, the century of socio-economic doctrine, and all within the authentic Arab spiritual context."
3. "The Ba'thist movement has given to Arabism its

114. *Following the Ba'th;* p. 52.

modern outlook and its positive revolutionary meaning. Nationalism has become synonymous with rebellion against under-development, social injustice and division, and of struggle for the unification of the Arab homeland. It rises up against the deficiences of society, against fanaticism and against all attacks on the dignity of the individual and of the society; and its struggles for democracy and human values."

4. "The great contribution of our Party in the creation of this modern and revolutionary outlook is due to its new conception of Arab unity; a conception which has freed unity from the straight jacket of general ideas and muddled thinking, and has opened the way to making its realisation possible. And this has been done by linking it in an organic way to the Arab people's struggle for freedom, democracy and socialism."

5. "If our Party was the first to call for the unification of the Arab struggle and has worked in that direction, it has also been the first to call for the struggle for unity and to effectively bring it about."

6. "The Ba'th Arab Socialist Party has played a historical role and has accomplished the first effective step towards Arab unity, that is to say the fusion of Syria and Egypt."

What is of concern here is the crucial contribution made by the Arab revolutionary movement and ideology when explaining the concept of unity, in discovering the logic of the ties which bind together the unity of struggle and the struggle for unity, and in going from the stage of ideological struggle to that of political struggle, which has made possible the bringing about of unity.

But what are the deficiencies which today still limit the horizons of this positive contribution made by the Arab revolutionary movement?

Here, Professor Michel 'Aflaq does not shy away

before the self-criticism which allows him to identify the shift in the development of the stage as a whole, and equally allows him to introduce a new stage. Having done this he then defines its main theoretical and practical characteristics.

In the same talk (The Historical Role of the Ba'thist Movement), given in 1960, Professor Michel 'Aflaq says[115]:

1. "What was lacking in the Party was organised socialist research and the elaboration of a detailed theory... In the first years of its existence the Party could restrict itself to declaring the independence of its Arab socialist road; but, it is our duty to go beyond this primary stage, to develop our thinking, to deepen and to enrich it thanks to the experiences of other countries. It is one of the responsabilities which the Ba'thists have taken upon themselves to carry out in the near future..."

2. "Our movement has before it a very great future; great responsibilities await it. Other Arab regions have still to be deeply influenced by Ba'th thinking. Once this has happened they will be involved in an interaction that will be both exchange and enrichment for our movement. Standing in front of us are the countries of the Arab Maghreb, the Soudan, the countries of the Arabic Gulf and the south of the peninsula; the countries of the Arab Orient, in which our Party is involved in a heroic struggle; and the United Arab Republic. As a leading progressive force in the struggle for Arab Unity, we have been influential, not only in the actual setting-up of the United Arab Republic, but can also take responsibility for the strenghening of the foundations, the deepening of the revolutionary character and the re-thinking of certain ideas, all of which made this fusion possible."

115. *Following the Ba'th;* pp. 54-56.

During a lecture given in Rabat in May 1960, Professor Michel 'Aflaq sketched the broad outlines of progressive nationalism, the new concept which has crystallised within the Arab revolutionary movement, consistent with the spirit of Arab nationalism[116]:

1. "A new vision, inspired by the soul of the century, the needs of the nation and its genuine past."

2. "The Arab struggle was unconcerned and made no attempt to attain a global level... it not only limited itself to an Arab framework but, going even further, to a single region, that is, a regional framework. It limited itself to fighting foreign occupation and sacrificed all its energies in pursuit of this goal, energies which should have served as the basis on which to build their own future after liberation."

3. "The characteristics of nationalism in Europe, during the XIXth and XXth centuries, are in contradiction whith the spirit of nationalism such as we see it. We have been victim of injustice and foreign occupation; and, being very attached to the origins of the nation, we are both patriotic and respectful of all other peoples."

4. "We felt that our nationalist struggle was prompted by humanitarian motives, and it was this that allowed the new thinking to take form. Consequently, we started by explaining the difference between nationalist theory dominant in the West and the nationalism of the oppressed peoples in Asia and Africa, of which Arab nationalism is a part."

5. "Our Arab nationalism does not limit itself simply to creating stronger bonds between individuals, but gives to the nation a sense of historical mission... this has forced us to re-examine our heritage, our civilisation and our history, and to have a new vision of it."

116. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 184-192.

6. "Before the appearance of our movement, our thinking was of a superficial nature and led us to believe that nationalism and our heritage would be contradictory on account of our secular attachments. But we have discovered that there is no contradiction between secularism and recognition of the fact that our past is rich in experiences that can only serve to inspire the soul of our civilisation. The new image which we have of our national heritage is a realistic, profound and living one; the stability momentarily lost in the heart of hearts of the young has been rediscovered and youth has been reconciled with the nation's past without at the same time being imprisoned by it."

7. "Spirit is in itself a historical force, a priceless revolutionary strength. While even greater effort is needed, the simple fact of situating the Arab national problem within a global theoretical framework can be considered as a first contribution to consolidating the Arab revolutionary movement on a solid basis."

8. "Arab nationalism has as much value as the life, the interest and the cause of the masses. It stems from the same basis as does the suffering of exploited and oppressed people."

9. "Arab unity, in its revolutionary conception, is the favorite target of the conspiracies created by the colonialist countries, the reactionnary class and international zionism. It has always been victim to this, since it is the secret of the rebirth and strengh of the Arabs."

10. "It had to be shown, and supported by proof, that the unity which leaders never stop talking about and governments never stop invoking, was not in fact what they wanted at all. Rather, unity became the tool in the conspiracies of the regionalist hard-liners and of those who wanted to compromise with colonialism. We had to prove that unity is a condition sine qua non of the people's struggle against a colonialism that will never

miss an opportunity to impose its exploitive policies. And that, consequently, neither the freedom struggle nor the socialist struggle can hope to be sucessful so long as a single people remain divided."

11. "In traditionalist theory, unity is the return to the natural state, the state of the nation before it was divided. As far as we are concerned, unity is quite different. For us, it is contemporary revolutionary unity. A unity based on the masses and blending with the struggle for socialism. So, there is no distinction between the nation's experience during this stage and the struggle. It is the recreation of the nation."

12. "The ends must not justify the means. Revolutions and reemerging nations are involved in the creation of a new man. This new man is aware of his responsibilities, and is able not only to be productive but also to exercise his creativity, and all within the framework of an independent, free-thinking personality. Machiavelian politics, the politics of the lie, has no moral value whatsoever and as such has no place in the future."

13. "The rich experience of those peoples who have been victims of injustice, colonialism and underdevelopment renders their nationalism a living stage on which their suffering does not give way to hatred but, on the contrary, is the means through which they can discover their own humanity."

14. "We are convinced that, for humanity in general, nationalism is a sound, stable and enduring state of affairs. So long as it is not only well understood and untainted by fanaticism, but has also rid itself of any covetous or expansionist design. Humanitarian nationalism is the application of a general theory of nationalism."

15. "In spite of the mistakes that have been made, unity remains more profound than everything else; it is in itself capable of correcting mistakes made. It has

always had need of a generation which believed in it, ready to struggle justly for its cause and carry on its mission: and it still does need this generation which believes in it if it is to have sufficiently strong foundations and if it is to withstand all tests. A militant generation, capable of creating the awareness, developing the struggle, fighting against the state of mind created by the divisions, and, in struggling against all traces of this state of mind, taking on those interests which still seek to profit from the divisions which exist."

16. "It is false to say that unity is a burden, on the contrary it offers us advantages and binds us together once we decide to make of it a revolutionary unity, that of the masses of the people... for the Arabs, unity is not just a matter of course. Any single region cannot hope to attain either stability or sufficient progress or long-lasting independence so long as our nation remains divided, and so long as colonialism continues to manipulate us and exploit our divisions. Consequently, unity is both a vital and decisive necessity."

17. "It is only by showing our faith in unity, by commiting ourselves to it and by working to achieve it that we can hope to create a socialist and democratic unity based on the people. Unity will not come about by fearing it or by leaving it to the whims of chance. In fact, conditions are not favorable to us since unity has many enemies in this world... but the unification of all the Arab regions is the condition on which the true Arab rebirth depends. Each region will make its own contribution to this process and, through its own experiences, it will add to that of the others. It is in such a way that the Arab experience will have common aspects and will take on its full meaning."

What has been broadly outlined here, is the theory of unity, conceived as unity based on the principle of the

unity of the relationships between the struggle for freedom, class struggle, and the struggle against under-development and fragmentation. It is a theory stemming from a new vision of nationalism which takes into consideration the whole historical context as related to contemporary Arab experience and the experiences of the peoples of the Third World. Apart from its revolutionary realism, this theory stands out for the link which it makes between the national heritage and today's realities. As well, it transforms the drives towards nationalism into a direct expression of the life and interest of the masses; and considers unity as a necessary condition for the success of both the struggle for freedom and the class struggle, for without unity, they will remain threatened by deviationism and defeat. In fact, regionalism leaves the field wide open for colonialism and the forces of reaction to juggle with the destiny of the Arabs and the interests of the proletarian masses of the Arab nation. Unity is constantly at grips with the unending conspiracies hatched by the colonialist and reactionary zionist alliance. Unity, seen as a civilising revolutionary concept, is the tool which will shape the strength and free the energies of the nation, linking the means to the goal, it is a concept which stands for a certain idea of man and the ethics of struggle.

The criteria on which this revolutionary unity are based crearly show the mistake made by that theory on which official declarations are based. In the latter case, unity is seen rather as a burden, something which is nothing more than mere trimming, something of a secondary nature which can be left aside without in any way effecting the independence, freedom, strength, progress and construction of the nation. It is as if our struggle against the reality of under-development, fragmentation and exploitation had nothing to do with foreign occupation nor with the self-interest of enemies

nor with the zionist presence. The impression is given that unity can be achieved without any recourse to struggle or need to fight against the situations which the opponents of the Arab revolution have created in an effort to throw insurmountable obstacles in the path of unity and to hamper the struggle for that unity.

In a speech given in Casablanca in 1960, Professor Michel 'Aflaq defined the revolutionary content of the concept of nationalism and of that of Arab unity[117]:

"The conditions, the situation and the strength of the immense majority of the workers of our nation, victims of injustice and exploitation, has prepared them to play a historical role during this stage. It is they who will save the nation, forming a vanguard of the risen people, to whom they will be the true mirror.

"How is it that we can be so sure that the nationalist proletarian angle of vision will necessarily refute a retrograde bourgeois theory which, in the same way as the non-nationalist proletarian view, has been favorable to fragmentation, and has dominated Arab thinking?

"As this for this new nationalist angle of vision, it is there both to correct mistakes and, at the same time, go beyond an existing reality which has reduced the Arab cause to a life and death struggle, and plunged the nation into undervelopment. Not only has such thinking lost all value but it has also lost contact with the century in which we live, except in its most repulsive aspect, that of vainglorious nationalism, negative nationalism"[118]:

In addition, the new revolutionary concept of Arab nationalism has been elaborated in order to save the nationalist cause from the ascendancy of an erroneous and partial theory which does but take account of only one

117. *Following the Ba'th*, p. 194.
118. Id: *Ibid.*

aspect of the contradictions in Arab reality. This dominant theory has no overall global vision and as such is not only incapable of encapsulating reality, but also lacks the means of binding the individual parts into a unified whole. The nationalist question, as it becomes apparent from the speech in Casablanca, is[119]:

"An indivisible whole. It is both the material and the spiritual life of the people. It concretises their just economic and social demands. It represents their rights and their legitimate national aspirations. It is their daily bread, their well being; it allows them to attain the independence of their nation and its unification, coming after the tearing-up and the fragmentation... by looking at the cause of our people from a global and realistic point of view, and putting aside the lies and the expediencies; by studying the correlation between freedom, social justice and global national unity; and by considering all these elements as a given which appears under different forms; then will we be able to direct the people's struggle on to the right road."

But danger and mistakes do not come only from the narrow and partial view of the national cause; they can also be found in the unitarian theory deprived of its liberating and socialist content. For this reason, in his speech, Professor Michel 'Aflaq continues by saying[120]:

"The Arab unity which we seek has for a long time been the victim of ignorance, confusion and misunderstanding. It was adopted and exploited by those who were least faithful to it. It was then used as a proof or as a pretext in order to cover up illegitimate aims. In fact, colonialism hid itself behind unitarian proposals, and

119. Id; *Ibid.*
120. Id. *Ibid;* p. 196.

the feudal class grasped this slogan in a treacherous and lying way, not because they wanted to make it into something concrete, but in order to thwart the social demands of the people and to combat the social revolution."

From this point, Professor 'Aflaq draws a decisive and cutting conclusion which can almost be considered as a maxim or a law[121]:

"No unity whith the forces of reaction and no progressist doctrine coming out of fragmentation."

Likewise, he underlines the internationalist ramifications of nationalist thinking according to the logic of Arab revolutionary ideology[122]:

"The people's movement which gives an impulse to the masses in all the Arab regions fully understands and is fully aware of the meaning that this gives to Arab nationalism; it knows that this means socialism and democracy, and that it is about a humanitarian nationalism which avoids the mistakes of the past and is out to set right again all those things in the past that were at the origin of the division in the heart of our nation and our society. This nationalism does not only concern the Arabs; it is the reflection of a new humanism. In other words, we believe that every nation in the world has the right to a free and independent personality, and that a new humanism based on free and progressist nationalisms who will cooperate with each other and have nothing to do with colonialism, racism and segregation, is absolutely necessary. Arab nationalist thinking ist not only for the benefit of Arabs but concerns the whole of

121. Id.; *Ibid.*
122. Id.; *Ibid.*, p. 198.

humanity... We must stay strongly attached to this humanitarian concept and this positive premisses of our nationalism."

Similarly during 1960, Professor Michel 'Aflaq, talking of "The Lebanon and Arab-ness", draws our attention to the fact that the logical links between the state of the regions and the unitarian struggle demand a much higher level of revolutionary maturity, in order that sound and revolutionary solutions can be brought to bear on the problems of the regions. In the same way, the superficial revolutionary outlook is condemned, whether it be for running away from the problem or for getting bogged down in it[123]:

"Our great Arab homeland is confronted with a series of problems and anomalies which daily challenge the genuine revolutionary spirit of Arab nationalism, pushing it to talk freely and openly about the principles on which this nationalism is based. The Arab Maghreb, with his specific historical, make-up, has gathered together Arabs and Berbers and afterwards, a large number of Europeans during the French occupation. The same goes for Irak and its ethnic minotiries, and in particular the large Kurd minotiry... in the same way that the Lebanon is made up, where the difference of civilisation can be understood in terms of the differences of doctrine and faith. All of these givens demand sound and revolutionary solutions allowing Arab-ness to preserve the whole of its territory and population and at the same time achieve the unity, understanding, and spiritual harmony of the nation. Achieving these goals necessitates dispensing with defeatist solutions which oscillate between severing off those parts which are

123. Id.; *Ibid.;* pp. 292-293.

problematic and keeping them but only through force and coertion."

These works of a political nature have brought improvements in several fields. Firstly, increased political awareness with regard to unity; secondly, in defining the position adopted by the Arab revolutionary movement towards the regime in the United Arab Republic; and thirdly, regarding political outrages on the occasion of the assassination attempt on 'Abd-al Karim Qassim in Iraq.

Under the title, "Unity... Two years after", we can read in number 397 of the newspaper "The Press", an editorial which expresses the attitude of the Arab revolutionary movement towards the paths followed since fusion in 1958. This editorial talks of the accomplishments made in the political and economic fields, in agrarian reform, and in the consolidation of liberation movements in Asia and Africa. It is stated there that[124]:

1. "A sincere militant attitude demands of us a criticism that is both objective and constructive. Furthermore, it implies the re-discovery of faith in the progress already made and which is beginning to take on a decisive aspect in the struggle for unity. This represents a decisive element in the future of the cause. Thus the wheels of history will start to turn, accelerating the movement towards Arab rebirth, so long as this rebirth is firmly and solidly anchored in a revolutionary and progressist spirit as unshakeable as a rock..."

2. "We hope that unity will allow the achievements of the people to progress and prepare them to defend what has been acquired and to participate extensively in the work of building the nation and accomplishing social

124. *The Ba'th's Struggle;* Part III, p. 125.

and economic progress. We also hope that unity will trigger off a reaction among the people in Syria and that in profiting from the richness of this experience the task of interaction with Egypt will be made that much easier. Egypt itself has experienced a revolutionary void due to the asphyxiation of the people's movement in that country... Now, for interaction to come about, it is essential that there be an extensive process of democratisation within the Republic; capable of stimulating the initiative of the masses... an intensification in the feelings of responsibility on the part of the people and, lastly, the enthusiasm of the citizens which will motivate them to play their part in the construction of a new society."

3. "The participation of the people necessitates that they be organised and regrouped around popular, political and trade-union committees; and also that they be represented in the rural, municipal and parliamentary institutions. All of this has to be done in such a way that not only are they able to control government action but can also take initiatives to stimulate government action. Thus can we create a popular foundation on which the regime can base itself, in order to respond to the social and political demands of the people..."

4. "The creation of such democratic institutions is essential to strengthen the struggle of progressist liberation, and to concretise economic and social programmes. Furthermore, their very existence is sufficient to maintain the direction and the economic planning selected on the path to socialism."

5. "In its position as a nucleus, the strength of the Arab Republic can be measured firstly, according to its harmony with the ideas and the will of the people from all its various regions, and secondly, its permanent action in favour of a living progressist model which would be both a center of radiation and a magnetic field,

unifying the Arab revolutionary forces and ensuring their progress."

6. "The Arab revolution is a militant experience of the highest degree, due to the organisation both of the people and of the trade-unions, and to the progressist spirit. Arab regions will hardly show enthusiasm for unity if this seems liable to mislead them, or to reduce the range of their achievements."

7. "In some regions of the Arab homeland, unity has lost its true nature through confessionalism, as in the Lebanon, and through racism, as in Iraq. The struggle for Arab liberation must maintain its humanitarian, progressist bearings in all fields, if it is to stop all infiltration and eliminate the illusions of all those who are attempting to lead Arab thinking astray... To accomplish a task of such importance, it is essential to keep the Arab Republic open to the whole Arab revolution and also to the interaction with its followers, as well as concretising the ideological aspect concerning both its aims and its political approach."

8. "The founding and the impact of socialism and democracy are not aimed solely at decreasing the time the Arabs have given themselves to reach unity; their first aim is to guarantee the maintaining of the struggle for unity against any new crisis and any blunders."

In the light of these criteria and thoughts, the Arab revolutionary movement has defined his position towards the regime of the United Arab Republic. This theme was first broached in a national bulletin published in March 1960 [125] which gives a detailed analysis of this very regime, and the gap between the demands imposed by unity, in its revolutionary meaning, and between the methods and the viewpoints of those holding power

125. *The Ba'th's Struggle;* Part IV, pp. 131-179.

regarding the understanding of unity and the choice of a direction which would achieve this, as well as all aspects of Arab politics. It defines the reasons which have led ministers to hand in their resignation and describes the methods applied by the government; lastly, it defines the policy of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party and its position towards the regime, as well as any possible modification of its attitude. We can summarize the main ideas from this bulletin as follows:

1. "Unity is a revolutionary action which demands giving up regionalist conceptions and methods of government. It insists on allowing for close interaction of the potentials of the two united regions... Until the present time, the government methods in the United Arab Republic have given the people, inside the Republic, a false idea of unity; it has led to the deformation of the nationalist policy of the Republic on an Arab level, because of plans which are based on propaganda and information which have already been exploited to a certain extent by the regionalist regime in Egypt. This policy has harmed the people's revolutionary struggle in the remainder of the Arab regions by using the disaster in Jordan as a pretext, and by contributing towards the failure of the revolution in Iraq, strife in the Lebanon and the weakening of the strength and the impact of the notion of unity."

2. "The socialist revolutionary elements have been pushed aside from national unity for not having opened up the way towards the spread of workers' and peasants' trade-unions, and for not having given unity a decisive role in deciding of the policy of the state, in controling the government and in straightening out its mistakes. All that already confirms the failure of the achievement of national unity and the policy followed to set up a direction leading to the establishing of a people's social-

ist regime. The present situation does not contain the seeds of an evolution towards a democratization allowing for the achievements of unity and its development, to be preserved."

3. "The extension of means of communication has allowed competent, revolutionary and reliable elements to keep a certain distance and to stay true to unity, because they have maintained their faith in unity and in its revolutionary orientation. They have sacrified themselves and are ready to sacrifice themselves again for unity.

"Those competent elements, who refused to adopt this method, or who considered it their duty to draw attention to the dangers of this method, have been dismissed from the key posts of the state."

4. "At the same time as this policy, the state took refuge in 'propaganda' in order to cover up its failure and mistakes. The newspapers, radio, triumphal arches, and the invocation of symbols in the course of mundane everyday events, were all used as a means of drawing away the public's attention from the mistakes and crises which were passed over in silence, and also as a means of trying to strengthen the citizen's attachment to the state as such. All this rather than allow the discovery and criticism of the mistakes made, an alternative which could have actually helped in the overcoming and eliminating of such mistakes."

5. "And let us add the repressive methods, the pressure, the terror, and the torture which the judicial authorities turned a blind eye to, just as they did with the enticements, falsifications and corruption."

6. "Not only was there no ideological and socialist foundation on which the authorities could base themselves; but on the contrary, they fought against any socialist orientation whose aim was the suppression of class division and exploitation. They called for 'class

collaboration' and their fight against the people's orga-ganizations and the trade union movement transformed the regime into an organization for exploitation and class collaboration that insured its self-preservation only by means of a powerful autocracy."

7. "In preserving the unity of the two components of the United Arab Republic, to the creation of which it has made an influencial contribution, the Party has taken on a heavy historical responsibility. The position of the Party with regard to the Republic is still that which was given by the national leadership. If the ministers, former members and supporters of the Party have given up all responsibility in the government, it is because they felt that it was no longer possible to save the situation and put the Republic on the right road so long as they stay in power. The resigning ministers considered that in so withdrawing they would help to expose the mistakes made and that these would be put right according to nationalist logic. In fact those who believe in unity and its progressist foundation are not responsible for the political mistakes committed by the government. Neither is unity responsible, contrary to the comments of reactionaries, fanatics and the agents of colonialism. The great danger lies in letting the enemies of unity exploit the mistakes of the regime in order to bring about the breakdown of the unity between the two regions which make up the Republic. The effect of dismantling the union, or even introducing ideas liable to change its nature, will be to smash the nationalist impulse of the people which is at the heart of the union; prevent the regroupment of Arabs based on the union; and neutralise the enthusiasm and ardour which can only encourage them to strengthen and enlarge the union's foundations."

8. "The Party will follow the same strategy and will continue to make, and make known, its cautious but

positive criticism, in so far as these opinions are both responsible and express the wishes of the people and of the militant forces."

These are the essential points contained in the national bulletin concerning the position adopted by the Arab revolutionary movement with regard to the government of the union. The distinctive nature of this attitude, its positive criticism, is underlined repeatedly; it seeks to correct the mistakes made but from an internal point of view. In other words, by appealing to the affection shown for unity; and by denouncing all those endeavours which seek, from a destructive and negative point of view, to take advantage of the mistakes made; and showing their opposition to these endeavours by means of statements, the adopting of clear positions, and through regional and national publications. In the statement made by Irak in 1960, entitled; "Our Position with regard to the United Arab Republic", we can quote the following passage[126]:

"Lastly, opponents have directed their attacks against the Party and have made out that it had given up the slogan of unity and started to work against the United Republic and against 'Abd-al Nasser. In the light of the gravity of these allegations, we feel it necessary here to spell out the position of the Party with regard to the United Arab Republic."

After having defined the criteria on which the Party based itself in order to set straight the political situation, the statement continues:

"We are not opponents of the United Arab Republic; on the contrary, we are the most faithful defenders

126. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part VII, pp. 91-95.

of its integrity which we cherish and for the achievement of which we played a major role. But our support differs from that of others, because we think that all shortcomings in the internal, external or nationalist policies of the Arab Republic hold back the triumph of our national cause... We distinguish between 'Abd-al Nasser and his government, who are not infallible, and the integrity of the Republic; we believe that all attacks on this integrity can be considered as treason against our national cause... The national leadership of our Party has adopted a revolutionary position in the face of the reaction of those comrades who found themselves exposed to pressure, attack and torture: those who refused to be enticed; our position as defender of the Republic has been maintained but we have not failed in our task which consists of criticising incorrect attitudes and insisting that mistakes be avoided and that the blanks must be filled in... We can sum up our attitude as follows[127]:

1. Drive back vigorously attacks by the forces of reaction and by colonialism which seek to separate the two components of the Republic.
2. Contain resolutely the sentimentalist extremists who seize hold of the faults of the regime as a pretext for setting themselves up as enemies of the United Republic.
3. Distinguish between the authorities, in so much as they are fallible and need to be advised and criticised, and the integrity of the Republic, for which we are ready to sacrifice our lives in defending.

In September 1960 was held the IVth National Congress. From it we can draw valuable lessons concerning the stage, the consequences of the mistakes made

127. Id.: *Ibid.;* p. 94.

by the regime during the unitarian experience, and the crisis within the Arab revolutionary forces. The national bulletin, which appeared in November 1960, anticipates to a certain extent the future; the threats which loomed concerning the idea of unity; and defines the necessary requirements for the national struggle. This analysis can be considered as a radical and critical revision of the past, and gives us a glimpse of the next stage.

The bulletin states that[128]:

1. "During the previous stage, the people's movement lost the possibility of directing the masses. After the people's movement, above all in Syria, had been able to direct the masses and record the greatest victory which it had ever known, in achieving unity between Syria and Egypt, we note that these movements have lost their hability to direct the masses. Either because of certain inherent subjective factors in the method used by these movements or because of the very hard objective circumstances which they had to go through."

2. "These people's movements found themselves confronted by colonialism, the forces of reaction and a military regime, all of whom were drawn up in the opposing camp. As for colonialism, it did not confront the people's movement face to face; it has changed its methods and employed new arms in the battle. Rather than join in direct battle, as it did in Algeria and Oman, colonialism made use of the ruling classes, certain reactionary forces and confessionalism. In fact, the forces of reaction have been resurrected in Saudi Arabia, in Jordan and elsewhere. What contributed to worsening the danger from the reactionary forces, was the military regime in power in more than one Arab region. The military movements have nowhere embraced the people's

128. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* part IV, pp. 181-219.

movements nor cooperated with them; they have considered the latter as opponents and have put their energies into liquidating them."

3. "The military governments have exploited the victories which they have recorded to strike a blow at the thinking of the Party, magnifying the negative aspects in the life of the Party so as to try to persuade the masses of the dangers which these aspects involve and the damage which they can provoque. The governments have taken upon themselves the task of strengthening the reactionary movements in order that they confront the people's movements; similarly, they have entirely fabricated and provoked battles between different factions of the people's movements and sown dissension in the heart of a united Party."

As for the process of self-criticism, it touches on the following essential points:

1. "The Congress notes the failure of the Party in not underlining the importance of democracy as a necessary condition for the evolution of our society, the success of the Arab struggle, and its preservation during all the stages it will go through; as well, the Party has failed in its task by not making clear and emphasizing the ideological, organizational, trade union and professional role of the Party in democratic life."

2. "The Party did not know how to raise itself to the level of its national tasks; its leaders very often let themselves become absorbed in regional problems; they neither adopted political positions determined by the interests of a single region nor demanded of the national leadership that it give priority to national questions; and, contrary to the demands of the national policy of the Party, they have not followed policies in the national

interest of the Party, adapted by solutions brought to bear on regional problems."

3. "During the previous stage, the Party, as a distinct and independent element, in both its outlook and its actions, to a large extent gave up these values. It gave them up by failing to ask the national leadership to emphasize these distinct values in respect to the trends developing in the regime of the Arab Republic; and by failing to specify the democratic, revolutionary and progressist content of our national outlook."

4. "The need to eliminate the method followed by the Party, which neutralises the role of the people and of the Party in the struggle; the Party preoccupied itself with the preparations being made for military coups d'état; its members did not insist that the national leadership react energetically in order that both the Party and its leadership distance themselves from these methods which go against the doctrine of the Party."

As for the attitude to be respected with regard to the United Arab Republic, it has been defined by the IVth national Congress as follows:

1. Defense of the unity of the two regions; positive criticism of the situation in the Republic; and denonciation of any criticism offered by colonialism or the forces of reaction, who only serve regionalist interests and seek to dislocate unity.

2. The rallying of Arab public opinion to the point where it is able to bring pression to bear on the government of the Arab Republic with the aim of improving the internal situation, methods and actions, and helping public opinion to express itself and to give it some thrust.

3. Insist on democracy and open the way to the

people's participation as essential to the preservation of unity between the two countries.

Concerning the stage to come, the Congress defined the vital part which the Party must play. It adopted the principle of planning by stages so as to improve the situation in the regions; as well, it defined the conditions for the Party's accession to power and specified its attitude with regard to the regime.

This is a summary, dating from 1960, of the evolution of the Arab revolutionary movement and ideology.

The most striking aspect of this evolution to which we must draw attention, is the acquisition on the part of the Arab revolutionary movement, of a profound and global awareness of the logical link between the crisis it went through and that which shook the Arab revolution in general. Also, this movement considers the stage of the sixties from a point of view doubly critical: not only is it interested in its own problems, but also in the subjective and objective factors as a whole in the Arab struggle. This stage has been dominated by the struggle between the following designs, forces and tendencies:

1. The struggle between the Arab revolution and the colonialist, Zionist and reactionary designs, the latters' objective being to insure the breakdown of unitarian thinking.

2. A struggle at the very heart of the Arab revolution, that is to say, between the diverse forces that claimed revolutionary authority.

3. A struggle at the core of the Arab revolutionary movement itself between historical evolution towards a higher theoretical level, and those tendencies that remained despotic and regional.

In following the evolution of Arab revolutionary ideology after 1960 we will discover the many aspects of the struggle: political, intellectual, popular and military; and that within these different aspects there is a common theme — the search to destroy Arab revolutionary thinking, and all those forces that claim authority over it, and which struggle for these objectives: unity, freedom, and socialism.

Chapter XII

Arab Revolutionary Ideology Faced with Scission

In 1961, the Arab revolutionary movement entered its fourteenth year as far as experience on political and organizational levels was concerned; although its ideological inception had, in fact, taken place ten years earlier, on April 7th, 1947. The appeal made by the Direction on April 7th, 1961, gave it an opportunity to define the Arab revolutionary movement's role concerning unitarian strife and to uncover the conspiracy aimed at distorting the revolutionary concept of Arab nationalism. This appeal defined the all-over concept which should inspire the Party's action; the Party was at the time attempting to draw the necessary lessons from the Arab revolutionary movement and from its militants' potentialities[129].

"Our Party started as a popular ideological movement, with the task of training competent revolutionary elements among our people, within the machinery of a Party in combat; this Party believes in the people and its action is taken towards forming real popular mobilization with the avowed intention of delivering battles for

129. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part IV, p. 240.

freedom against colonialism, reaction and underdevelopment."

The appeal later underlined the role played by the Arab revolutionary movement during the period between the forties and the fifties[130].

"Our Party gave the impetus for a great popular freedom movement in Arab society. It made a decisive contribution to the victories achieved by our people throughout the various Regions of the Arab East, over colonialism and the power it exercises, over class-exploitation, reaction and regionalism, and towards the unification of mass struggle in the various Regions of the Arab Homeland."

In spite of its historic role, which culminated in the establishment of unity between Syria and Egypt in 1958, the movement was soon called upon to face a major conspiracy; this began with an attempt to distort the experience of unity and finally directly attacked the movement and unity itself[131].

"If the people's aims are today exposed to the dangers of distortion and deviation —now that unity, the central nucleus, has been established to express the revolutionary nature of objectives (in full accordance with the will of the people)— it is, more than any other, our own Party which is in a position to foresee danger and assume the responsibility of confronting it."

This responsibility, in line with the appeal mentioned above, can be defined as follows:

"The responsibility our party is called upon to as-

130. Id: *Ibid.*
131. Id: *Ibid.*

sume is the revival of popular forces, the mobilization of the masses to engage in struggle, the full awakening of the people, in order that they may reach their aims and denounce the distortion with which unity is confronted, for this can only lead to stagnation and to yet another crisis... Our Party finds itself obliged to denounce the conspiracies aimed at the concepts from which genuine revolutionary orientation devolves, in order to free the Arab Nation and destroy criminal attempts to diminish the Party's revolutionary apparatus and compromise their security and their power."

The choice of this role is a natural result of our awareness of the contradictions separating the apparent organs of the movement of the masses; in other words, between the level of official action and that of the historic revolutionary task exacted by unity[132].

"The role of our Party —which is loyal to inqilâb (upheaval) and to the people— in the accomplishment of genuine revolution at the heart of Arab society, a revolution capable of attaining real popular unity, can be assumed by no other authority calling for propaganda, security apparatus or communications. The role is the target of conspiracies fomented by all authorities who do not believe in the people, by colonialism and its henchmen, reactionaries and those who live by spoliation."

Events have confirmed the fact that the imperialist, Zionist, reactionary alliance was well and truly at the origin of this plot against unity, with the aim of dissolving it and exploding it from within. The year 1961 was the stage of a dual conspiracy against the national cause with intent to create scission. The first attempt took place in Iraq, the second in the United Arab

132. Id: *Ibid.*

Republic. The most surprising element was their coincidence in time. The plan of the foes of Arab unity was chronologically revealed in the most obvious manner in September 1961.

On September 11th, 1961, armed combat was, in fact, declared between Iraqi troops and Kurd tribes; the latter declared their insubordination by taking up armas and brandishing a slogan calling for the division of Irak. At this time, the colonialist plan was making use of the military dictatorship to fortify ethnic division, distort the Arab revolutionary movement, its humanitarian nature and progressive, civilizing impact.

The declaration signed by the Iraqi "National Front" defined the position adopted by Arab revolutionary ideology towards the Kurd patriotic movement and denounced the intention of the conspiracy which was using Kurd national aspirations to counter the Arab revolutionary movement.

This declaration, made at the end of September 1961, defined the correct line to be followed by the Arab struggle to resolve the Kurd question. It disavowed the intentions of colonialists and all campaigns in favour of scission, the aim of which was simply to create an artificial contradiction between the Arab revolutionary movement and the Kurd patriotic movement.

The declaration stated[133]:

"The Arab national movement is a humanitarian trend. It is the natural ally of any progressive movement. It is fighting for, and offers its support to, all legitimate national aspirations... The best possible guarantee for the satisfaction of legitimate Kurd aspirations is alliance and cooperation with national popular movements, which rise staunchly against colonialism, feudalism, reaction and dictatorship."

133. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part VII, pp. 171-173.

With regard to the second plot of the same kind, an attack on the fusion of Syria and Egypt (which took place in 1958) was under way... September 28th, 1961, coincided with the military "coup d'état" of the separatists; this revealed reactionary and separatist intentions and the relation between suspected projects going beyond "the framework of the northern internal Region and the nature of authority in the United Arab Republic", according to a statement made by the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party in Iraq on September 29th, 1961. The Arab revolutionary movement moreover defined its position with regard to this serious event at the beginning of the declaration[134].

"Loyal Arab elements, which have at their head our militant Party, are fully aware of the errors and defaults of authority, for which there can be no other alternative, in the people's interest, than loyalty to the nationalist, socialist, democratic and progressive concept, which ensures the preservation of the unity of both Regions of the United Arab Republic and its defence against reactionary and colonialist conspiracies; this must take first place in the priorities of struggle."

On October 5th, 1961, the national high-command made a declaration concerning this disastrous scission, in which it defined the revolutionary movement's position[135]:

"If the struggle for unity has been stabbed in the United Arab Republic and the Arab Homeland through the accession to power of the military junta and the reactionary movement in Syria, this is because the regionalist government's approach —which is autocratic

134. Id: *Ibid;* p. 174.
135. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part VI, pp. 11-14.

and contrary to 'Abd-al-Nasser's view of unity— has taken a false road; this has weakened unity and enabled the separatist trend to gain a victory.

"The renewal of unity between Syria and Egypt and the realization of all-over Arab unity exacts that we turn to the people, organize their vanguard forces, reinforce the organizations to which the proletarian classes are affiliated within the framework of a democratic, popular regime. We must abandon, once and for all, the method of mobilizing the people by superficial propaganda and security and communications apparatus, of neutralizing their leadership and dismantling their organizations in such a way as to weaken unity and submit it to autocratic authority.

"Reconstitution of unity between these two Regions of the United Arab Republic guarantees the perpetuation of the struggle to establish democracy there. It stands as a security for the renewal of unity and fort its protection; it enables us to continue on the path of all-encompassing Arab unity in total confidence."

While the above declaration was not devoid of emotional reactions to the bitter experience of seeing unity emptied of its content (for it took refuge in the idea that failure was due to the fact that the government had no real unitarian foundation), the following declaration, on the contrary, on October 14th, 1961, came closer to the Arab revolutionary movement's nature and its scientific combat-line.

The declaration concentrated on studying the motives of this disastrous scission and on well-balanced criticism and self-criticim. It put people on guard against colonialist projects and the oft-repeated conspiracies fomented to ward off unity and render useless the means at the

disposal of revolutionaries. In its introduction, it is stated that[136]:

"Examination of the causes of disaster in the first unitarian experience, the defining of selfcriticism responsabilities, the designation of weak points and selfcriticism of the Party itself and all progressive nationalist elements is, at this time, a national mission. Without this, we are incapable either of enriching or renewing the progressive struggle for unity in the Arab Homeland; and it would be difficult for the partisans of unity in Syria to close up progressive ranks and give unity a new start on sounder foundations and more stable conditions, both in national and progressive fields."

Scission created a new artificial condition. We had to evaluate the importance of this event, (which corresponded to the desires of colonialism, Zionism and reaction), in order that the strategy of unitarian revolutionary action might reach a level enabling it to face the new situation decisively. The declaration in question, made by the national high-command, defined, moreover, the grave implications of the new situation and attempted to gauge their importance:

"Scission exposes Syria to considerable dangers of a colonialist and reactionary nature. Reactionary activity, previously strong in Syria, has reappeared and is undertaking to exploit all the mistakes made with regard to unity in order to impose an unlimited form of bourgeois dictatorship and to hinder any popular action capable of enabling the progressive movement to recover its role and guide the masses. The reactionary movement's activity is directed towards imposing in Syria a political situation, supported by the Arab reactionary authorities

136. Id: *Ibid.*

in power, which would prevent Syria from retrieving its popular revolutionary role at the heart of the movement for freedom and Arab unity... Reaction and colonialism are converging their full attack on the partisans of unity and democracy... Colonialism and reaction have no intention of stopping at undermining unity in these two Regions only. Their hope is that the failure of unity will enable them to annihilate the Arab people's enthusiasm and break its spirit. The partisans of unity are today called upon to reveal this project and denounce the forces which facilitate things by their own opportunist attitudes..."

In the light of the above revelation, the national high-command's declaration defined future strategy for unitarian action. It stated that:

"From the day on which the 'coup d'état' took place, the Arab people realized that its only weapon to counter colonialist and reactionary attacks was the constitution of a wide national front... If unitarian and democratic forces in Syria demand, as first priority, respect for democratic freedom and the constitution of a national front, it is because they are firmly convinced that the Arab people in Syria are still fighting under the flag of Arab unity, that by winning the fight for freedom they will choose none other than the path of unity and will benefit from unitarian experience to build foundations and elaborate action-conditions of a more stable nature."

It was for this reason that the strategy which was to guide the resurgence of unitarian strife had to have sound foundations and draw its inspiration from past lessons. This was the salient preoccupation of the Arab revolutionary movement. It believed, in this perspective,

that the superficial and emotional aspect of unity proposed, which neglected to take into account the circumstances of the disaster, simply "declared war on unity in the name of unity", because it laid the whole unitarian operation at the mercy of clashes with colonialism and its machinations. Moreover, the Arab revolutionary movement warned us of the danger of wavering between primary opposition and secondary, deleterious contradictions:

"Those who take action towards transforming the war against scission into a war against democratic unitarian elements in Syria and throughout the Arab Homeland, undermine unity itself by choosing as their target the very elements that seek renewal and the broadening of its role. They facilitate reaction's task and once more give it an opportunity to diminish our progressive unitarian struggle... We do not need to denounce the aims of the campaign directed against the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party... The partisans of unity are called upon to transmute disaster into a living experience (which will become the starting-point of unitarian struggle) in order that the bases of popular strife can be clearly defined and more favourable conditions created; these will guide our steps in the march towards unity, freedom and socialism."

A very complete political declaration entitled "The Ba'th and the Struggle for Unity" was made in October 1961, in which the Party explained the concept of Arab unity according to revolutionary ideology and defined the role of the Arab revolutionary movement in the realization of unity between Egypt and Syria. It emphasized the contradiction opposing the revolutionary level required by unity and the attitude of those in power, which inevitably led to scission. It reached the conclusion that

scission cast us into an abyss and it indicated the only possible way to overcome scission and reconstruct unity once more.

The salient points of this declaration are as follows[137]:

"By upholding the slogan expressing the aims of Arab unity —freedom and socialism— the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party has defined the revolutionary concept of unity and the perfect correlation which exists between the two — between unity and the liberation of the country from the yoke of colonialism and the popular masses from oppression; between unity and the elimination of class-exploitation, under-development and poverty... Unity is the cure for the evils of regionalism. Rupture of the bonds which link together unity, freedom and socialism enables the enemies of the people to falsify and discredit unity. According to the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party's view, popular strife is the only means for realizing Arab unity in its revolutionary acceptation. Unity, freedom and socialism alone correspond to the drive and interests of the popular masses and only the popular masses guarantee the realization of these aims in a sound manner... It is for this reason that the struggle for unity has been based on popular mass strife... Popular strife can never be other tan democratic... On the basis of these principles, the Ba'th Party adopted the path to the realization of unity in 1958... This was intended as a starting-point for global unity on sound foundations— the Arab future in miniature, a base for Arab liberation and a way of combating the colonialist menace. Unitarian authority was envisaged as nationalist, liberating and exemplary, with the idea of regrouping all the Arab peoples, of broadening unity, of extricating it from stagnation and giving the people an

137. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part VII, pp. 179-203.

opportunity to participate in their protection and defence. The "Coup d'Etat" and the scission were provoked by forces hostile to unity... Our awareness of unity's cause and knowledge of the circumstances of the disaster provide a lesson the Arab freedom-movement has been able to use in order to activate the struggle and build up Arab unity on foundations which guarantee its continuity."

Early in December 1961, a comprehensive report was published. It contained a sincere self-criticism and, at the same time, resumed the strategy of the Arab revolutionary movement after the disaster of the separation.

The self-criticism concerned the following points:

a) The rupture in the balance of the dialectical relation between the two objectives —freedom and socialism— and unity led us to adopt positions which were devoid of scientific foundations. Unity of Syria and Egypt in 1958, in fact, had at its disposal no guarantees to prevent it toppling into the enemy camp and disintegrating. Liberty and socialism took on the aspect of secondary objectives of lesser importance which did not merit the same place as unity.

b) The defect of establishing in the operation a meeting-point between theory and strategy led us to the false conclusion that unity, no matter what form it took, was ineluctibly capable of obtaining the satisfaction of all other demands.

c) Incomplete understanding of the Party role, the erroneous method used by us to accomplish our mission and the negative influence of these defaults had a deleterious effect on the close links between ends and means.

d) Our Party did not propose a plan of unity corres-

ponding to its aspirations, and the project of unitary fusion proposed by the Party was not discussed, for the occasion never arose. With no opportunity to enter into real negotiations, the project was passed over in silence. The absence of a clear, premeditated model of unity resulted in the exportation to Syria of an Egyptian type of government, with all its defects and practical errors; (in other words, regionalism and dictatorial power).

e) No revolutionary force was in a position to distinguish between a unitarian regime and the system of the United Arab Republic. This might have ensured the protection of unity and "clipped the wings" of regionalist dictatorial authority; in other words, in order to rectify mistakes, the maintenance of unity could have been allied to the practice of mass struggle in both Regions. The confusion between genuine unity and a regime which claimed affiliation in name only, made it impossible for a popular basis on which to build such a corrective operation to survive.

f) The national high-command contented itself with elaborating long-term strategy to redress the situation of the Arab Republic. It did not foresee the possibility of rapid action with concomitant urgent measures.

The broad outlines of the unitarian strategy for differents stages, were resumed in the above declaration[138]:

a) We must, first of all, place essential Party aims on the same footing and, as a result, the Party's position with regard to any unitarian progress must be based on its three unitarian, democratic and progressive aspects; in other words, it bases itself on guarantees which ensure the preparation of objective conditions contributing to

138. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 27-43.

the development of unitarian, democratic and progressive forces and their struggle.

b) The close links between ends and means must be emphasized, for these ensure concretization, together with refusal of the slogan: National interest comes before that of the Party. It is out of the question that any eventual contradiction could oppose national interest to that of the Party.

c) Our Party's mission during the period following on the scission is to face up to the dangers which have arisen and will continue to arise out of the new situation, and deal with them. We must, for this, brandish the slogan calling for the resurgence of unity and struggle to establish democracy in both Regions in order that the Republic may have at its disposal guarantees and protection enabling it to follow the path of all-over Arab unity.

This dealt whith the broad lines of unitarian theory on the levels of ideology and political strategy during 1961, the year of the scission. Through these general outlines, we have realized that Arab Syrian ideology had drawn from scientific experience material enabling it to consolidate the dialectical relationship between theories of the three pillars of its intellectual and doctrinal edifice — unity, freedom and socialism. The new situation and the problems created by scission confirmed the growing aspirations of the Arab revolutionary movement, which was seeking to bring about a decisive bond between ideological horizons and a political line, on the one hand, and the link between a political line and the revolutionary urge fighting for its application on the other.

Reaction against campaigns attacking the Party and against the negative character of the regime of 'Abd-al-Nasser (who was well installed in power, highly pleased

with himself and his omnipotence and superiority) encouraged the appearance of certain initiatives which were to become more and more evident in the Party during the years which followed. These initiatives were the outcome of counter-reaction dictated by the instinct of self-preservation and self-defence which had begun to find expression among all those who were strongly affiliated to the Party but were unduly concerned about its security and its effective role. These initiatives had been exploited to the maximun by those who lusted after power and hungered to play cardinal roles. They forced the Party to withdraw into its shell, into vanity and negative competition. They deflected it from the crisis it was undergoing and, as a result, from the general crisis shaking the Arab revolution at the time. They led it to content itself with observing the defects and crises of other movements and competitive forces. They deflected it from its own true attitude, which would have enabled it to rectify the mistakes of the national struggle and assure its leadership; they plunged it into the illusion of power, delivered it up to the deceptive forces power creates, with the aim of preventing the Arab revolution from recovering from the disaster of scission. However, recovery became possible, thanks to the action of the Arab revolutionary movement, which was preparing to carry on the struggle for unity on new theoretic and strategic bases, and found itself able to look on the disaster as a new starting-point in a heightened fight for unity and a renewal of the historic path.

Let us go on to 1962. The most noteworthy event recorded by Arab revolutionary ideology during the year under review was a new series of attempts to draw conclusions with regard to unity and the effort to discern new rules and criteria directly concerning the logic of unitarian strife to guide struggle effectively during this phase.

The voluminous political declaration made by the national high-command on February 21st, 1962, the articles by Professor Michel 'Aflaq in the Ba'th newspaper between July and September of the same year, together with certain regional attempts, particularly in Iraq (without enumerating all the decisive measures taken by the Arab revolutionary movement at the Fifth National Congress), were all aimed at the preservation of the intellectual cohesion of the Party's theoretic and political unitarian line; they tried to divest themselves of possible consequences and repercussions from the negative period of scission on the attitudes and ideas of certain militants who had deviated from the concept and strategy of stages, from which Arab revolutionary ideology devolves. These various elements were all expression of the premises of the new stage on which Arab revolutionary thought was embarking and the militant institutions affiliated to the Arab revolution.

Before we examine the cardinal ideas which arose out of theoretical tentatives and further political analyses in 1962, we must emphasize a number of facts:

1. We entered on this phase after a prolonged period of repression, and it was for this reason, as much on a theoretical as on a practical level, that political anlyses and stands brought into evidence the various types of disturbances which could lead to errors and to deviation.

2. To outdistance this phase we needed a clear, deep, objective abstract view of things, independent of all political aims and personal ambitions. Those who failed to reach this level were condemned to fall away; either they would give way to temptation or they would hit back, and in either case they would find themselves unable to rise to a new phase going beyond the contradictory attitudes just mentioned —either justifying the past or crossing it off, as if it had never existed. When we speak of the past, we mean the period previous to

scission— that is to say, the period during which we lived the experience of unity. These subjective attitudes either hid behind blind positivism, which kept silent about blunders committed during the previous experience, or behind blind negativism, which purported to ignore the dangers of scission threatening unity and its drive towards freedom, and exaggerated all mistakes made.

3. Dissension reached the very heart of political movements and sundered the bonds linking these forces together. This was the inevitable result of the cruel rents to which the partisans of unity had fallen victim, diversity of interpretations and motives, and the lack of a fresh outlook.

Arab revolutionary ideology was obliged to face up to this disturbing atmosphere on levels of theory and practice, and to put an end to it, if unity were to be saved. It was obliged to define its logic and consolidate its theoretic principles in the light of the analysis of errors made during past experiences. It was compelled to define new militant strategy and resolve the contradictions affecting the Arab revolutionary movement...

All this took place in a climate heavy with subjective reactions and opportunism and favourable to colonialist designs. The latter were preparing to neutralize the genuine forces which had realized unity and were capable of distilling out of failure a historic lesson, rich with positive teaching, strong enough to denounce the defaults of the particular phase, encourage us to correct them and put unitarian struggle back on the right road.

The declaration of the national high-command of February 21st, 1962, asked us to reject all forms of defeatism encouraged by the separatists and to offer resistance. It incited us to avoid closing ourselves off in subjective attitudes and actions in order to rectify the mistakes of the experience and help us to dominate its

inherent negative aspects. In the introduction to the declaration made by Professor Michel 'Aflaq, it was stated that[139]:

"Unity's momentary defeat encourages our Party to examine the causes of failure, to define responsibilities, denounce errors and profit from experience. The Arab revolutionary vanguard finds itself obliged to make a prudent scientific study, devoid of sentimentality and traditionalism, of the experience and the causes of its failure. Our national objective —the future of unity— which is indispensable for the life of the Nation, is dependent on an objective, level-headed approach and the conduct of militant action in favour of the realization of unity on sound, indestructible foundations."

Thus, it was amidst innumerable contradictory attitudes, dominated by subjectivity, vanity, the need for self-justification, together with counter-reactions, that the Arab revolutionary movement found itself obliged to expound their prudent, objective theory, capable of apprehending totally and in depth all the aspects of past experience. It was in this feverish situation where sentimentality was predominant that the movement defined the lessons to be drawn and its previsions for the future.

This attitude was the expression of a national requirement. As the declaration stated, "from east to west throughout the Homeland, Arab people are awaiting an explanation of the causes of disaster for, while it reached the same level as the historic event of unity, it outdistanced particular regional interests and theories. We must furnish a reply which corresponds totally to the destiny of the Nation and to its continuity."

139. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* Part VI, pp. 44-60.

To tell the truth, whenever the Nation has found itself faced with a momentous decision, this level has always been lacking. The Arab revolutionary movement counted on its revolutionary spirit to fill the gap. However, the major intrigue directed against the Arab revolution was aimed precisely at preventing the gap being filled and at avoiding that this positive decisive factor be placed at the disposal of revolutions, and so help to ensure their success.

A further study of this declaration and of the theoretical and practical stage attained by the Arab revolutionary movement in comparison with the original level of its initiatives, its proposals and its view of unity, reveals the cardinal issue with regard either to the success of unity or the failure of authority and its consequent repercussions on unity. The declaration states:

"Just at the time that the Party's representative was about to meet 'Abd-al-Nasser to examine with him the question of union and prepare the arrival of a government delegation, 'Abd-al-Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal exploitation. From that day forward, the Party and its Arab cells mobilized to defend Egypt in its new anti-colonialist combat. Such an attitude responded not only to the requirements of the unity of Arab strife, but also prepared the way for the accomplishment of unity and revealed to Egypt both its significance and its realistic aspect. The Party's action was inspired by Arab revolutionary thought and ideology, which believed in the revolutionary nature of unity. According to this doctrine, unity can never take place spontaneously but requires daily, national struggle. Moreover, Egypt had to be looked on as an essential factor on which any tentative realization of unity was dependent. Egypt had always hitherto been a difficult

problem and, therefore, with a fresh start, it was important to encourage any enthusiasm shown by Egypt for Arab unity... During negotiations, 'Abd-al-Nasser's proposal exacting the dissolution of Syrian parties and the postponement to a later date of the examination of the form unity was to take, was a surprise to the Party. Nevertheless, none of the conditions imposed by 'Abd-al-Nasser could constitute an obstacle for unity."

In this declaration, Professor Michel 'Aflaq indicated the major reasons which impelled the Party to approach the experience of unity in such a way as to reveal the various problems it had encountered. Allying criticism and self-criticism, he stated that[140]:

"When the Party envisaged the question of unity, it counted on popular interaction between both components of the new republic, and also between the components and the Arab movements involved in strife. It believed that such interaction would protect us effectively from divergence and it counted on the drive of the masses and their attachment to unity. However, the confidence which the Party showed 'Abd-al-Nasser was at the root of various important contradictions. These could, in fact, have been avoided if the Party had maintained its role at the head of the masses, as a popular revolutionary movement should have done. It should have used all its efforts to preserve the people's cause while continuing to protect the unitarian organization.

"At the same time, the Party committed another grave error by postponing to a later date study of the content of unity, guaranteeing the constitution of a new national entity and the form it was to adopt. The Party in this way hastened its own dissolution and offered

140. Id: *Ibid;* p. 47.

autocratie power an opportunity to empty unity of its democratic and socialist content.

"All the consequences which followed ineluctibly from this attitude were emphasized by the declaration of the national high-command under review. We discovered that the persistance of Nasser's regime in its errors, the dispersion of revolutionary forces and the fact that the masses were off their guard, prevented a rectification of the situation in the framework of unity.

"In this way, colonialism, reaction and the enemies of Arab nationalism —all those who will never abandon their conspiracies against unity— at last found an opportunity to execute their projects in perfect mutual agreement, for the people were enslaved and muzzled and their forces dispersed"[141].

Professor Michel 'Aflaq went on to underline a series of important truths[142]:

1. "No matter the gravity of the mistakes made by the United Arab Republic regime, nothing can justify scission. The failure of the unitarian experience is the result of error; but scission is the result of a deliberate machination."

2. "The idea of unity has not failed. It was its poor application that brought about failure. Unity is a revolutionary operation. It is in open contradiction with fragmentation and predominant interests of today. Any call for unity which neglects this revolutionary concept, aimed at the radical application of the present reality and the birth of daily struggle in theory and practice, is nothing but a lie. Its aim is to lead us astray and put us to sleep."

3. "At the time the Party was launched into unity, its

141. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 47-48.
142. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 48-49, 54-55, 58-59.

organization was inadequate and it had difficulty in making itself known and going deeper into its ideology. Right up to the proclamation of unity, the Arabs failed to reach a satisfactory level of awareness, maturity and coherence."

4. "One of the most important lessons to be learned from the failure of unity is that the unity of Arab strife is, in fact, an expression of the unity of the Nation. All popular movements throughout the Homeland must always bear this truth in mind, for if they do not hasten to unify their struggle, co-ordinate their plans and draw mutual benefit from their experiences, our people's cause will be vulnerable to new disasters. Every time we progress on the path of unity, we run the risk of error or failure, in as far as we fail to act decisively in realizing unity in strife and as long as unity itself presents real weaknesses."

5. "The mistakes of authority in no way excuse the role of the educated classes, particularly Egyptian writers and intellectuals, who carry a heavy responsibility in this matter. They barely raised their voices to prevent the distortion of unity and to oppose the actions of authority. The government in fact made use of Egypt's material and cultural contribution to undermine unity."

6. "On account of its enormous potential, we consider Egypt's role in any Arab struggle, and particularly in the struggle for unity, as one of the highest importance. We also believe that the educated classes must offer sincere criticism with regard to any action or any influence likely to undermine Arab awareness in Egypt. Lack of understanding facilitated the task of the governmental regime, which was able to deform the Arab watchwords expressed during this experience and stifle any attempt to recover the path to unity."

7. "We demand that the Egyptian authorities abandon their absolutism and regionalist attitude. They are

requested to examine and take cognizance of the preceding experience in all its fulness. They should, moreover, analyse this failure, in the light of the role of autocracy and regionalism which neglected popular participation."

8. "We disclaim the doubtful logic, which leads us to fear the Party's action and to mistrust free, popular, progressive organization. The people's potentialities develop in direct ratio to the degree of freedom available to them. Increase in the people's freedom depends on the revolutionary, democratic organization whose aim it is to build a socialist Arab state."

9. "Autocratic, dictatorial authority led unity to disaster. Scission was the work of the reactionary class. All this only confirms once again the close links between the people's primary objectives —unity, freedom and socialism— which history will never forget. It is now clear that the enemies of Arab nationalism are identical to those who oppose freedom and socialism."

10. "Scission was not simply a consequence of the failure in the experience of unity, but rather the fruit of premeditated action aimed at the re-establishment of reaction and the return of colonialism. It must be admitted that if the failure of the unitarian experience gave rise to scission and facilitated reaction's triumph, it was because the reactionary class made use of every possible means at its disposal to bring about disaster. Scission was the result of collusion between the reaction and colonialism with a view to safeguarding their own interests."

11. "Only strong unification of revolutionary movements' struggle within the Arab Homeland will enable us to succeed in the fight for genuine unity. Only this can provide the means to raise the level of understanding and of the people's organization and encourage the mobilization of all Arabs to combat fragmentation. If we are to

protect the concept of unity from ambiguity and avoid blunders, our unified Arab struggle aiming at the realization of unity, depends on our ability to create a perfect organization, capable of preserving the nationalist content of unity, of avoiding all tendencies to deviation and of protecting us from regionalistic despotism."

12. "In the view of the Arab revolutionary movement, unity, with its socialistic, democratic content and its impulsion towards freedom is best suited to the regime of fusion."

The Fifth National Congress put an end to varied interpretations and reconciled the different views prevalent in the Arab revolutionary movement concerning the preceding period and the fact of scission. It also described the future as envisaged by the movement. During the Congress, the analysis of the causes of scission and the reality of power responsible for it, together with the strategy to be employed in the future, all supported the stand adopted by Professor Michel 'Aflaq in the national high-comand's declaration of February 21st, 1962, which we have already analysed.

The Fifth National Congress took place in mid-May, 1962. The two statements issued by the high-command on May 14th and 15th, 1962, the internal bulletin issued in June of the same year defining the Congress' agenda together with the statement made during the Congress by its founder, Michel 'Aflaq, provide the cardinal sources that indicate the logic on which study was based, discussions undertaken and advice formulated. These elements enable us to resume the salient points[143]:

1. "The unity at which we aim is an energizing factor. It compels us to get the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party

143. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 61-94.

under way, to develop a popular, revolutionary, progressive movement. The Party has, since its inception, been based on a revolutionary view of unity and has in this way distinguished itself from all other Arab movements and parties."

2. "Arab unity is the favourite target of the century for conspiracies. It is attacked by colonialism and international Zionism, which created the State of Israel to bar the road to its realization. It also has to submit to the assaults of Arab reaction and bear the consequences of fanaticism, intellectual under-development, confessionalim and regionalism. It is equally exposed to attack by opportunist progressivism and Communist parties..."

3. "Unity will enable Arabs to live as a Nation, with its own personality and civilization, which can never cease to grow. Unity cannot take place by its own impetus. Its realization requires revolution. This cannot be dissociated from popular revolution, with the aim of acquiring freedom and establishing socialism. The revolution set in motion by unity must, however, remain a first priority, for it confers on freedom and socialism their true dimension and accentuates their authenticity. Fragmentation is the negation of real freedom, of total liberation and genuine socialism."

4. "It is precisely by relating the establishment of socialism to the realization of unity and by calling on the support of the masses that the Party has, since its inception, realized a decisive, historic transformation in the fight for unity and the national struggle. The revolution's accomplishment depends on the attitude dictated and made effective by this theory in action and in strife. In other words, the Ba'th must stand as the Party of Unity."

5. "The Party is responsible for the re-establishment of unity. It is under the obligation to render its concrete realization possible, to stand as the guarantor of its

success, instead of succumbing to the impact of its failure. It must not leave the way open to the enemies of the Arab Nation to exploit the tremor the Party has undergone and leave them free to foment fanatical regionalist and confessionalist campaings. Such campaigns can only darken the idea of unity, and would end by discrediting it in the eyes of the masses; they would push them back upon themselves and in this way modify and deviate the natural course of Arab history."

6. "Fully conscious of its mission, the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party feels itself called upon to denounce the pretexts invoked by its enemies for submitting unity to their own interests. The Party can give no quarter to those who act, for the time being, in the name of unity with the intention of profiting from and betraying it. It states out loud that unity is the guarantor of justice and of the authenticity of progressive realizations as a whole."

7. "Separatist elements are fighting potential unity in the name of total unity, which is still a long way off. Today, however, before the inception of the United Arab Republic, they must expect an even fiercer, more pitiless struggle. They will do all in their power to impose the logic of fragmentation as a doctrine capable of supplanting the ideology of Arab unity."

8. "No group, no power, no Region has the right to refuse unity on the pretext of practical errors which have warped the path of unity. It is for the Arab Nation to realize unity and accomplish its own drive."

9. "Unity is not simply the rallying of Syria to the cause of the Egyptian revolution. It is rather the starting-point of all-over Arab revolution... Unity cannot be measured by the immediate gains or losses to which it gives rise in either of the two countries. Organized popular struggle is the only sound, permanent guarantee

of unity's realization and its constancy on the right road."

10. "All the revolutionary forces in the Arab Homeland must be mobilized to consolidate unity. This necessitates the constitution of a progressive Arab front."

11. "The popular masses —workers, peasants and progressive intellectuals— must tighten the links which bind them together, withstand the separatists and undo reactionary and colonialist conspiracies. The flag of Syrian and Egyptian unity must fly again, for this is but a phase in the realization of all-over Arab unity, the stamp of which is indelible."

Speaking during the Fifth National Congress, Professor Michel 'Aflaq described the Arab revolutionary movement's view of this phase. He drew our attention to the principal tasks to be accomplished in assuming the struggle for unity on organizational and ideological planes. We perceive through the ideas expressed that, despite acute internal strife, the Arab revolutionary movement was continuing its theoretic and practical path. Externally, it came into head-on collision with the enemies of Arab revolution who were fighting with all their might the unitarian policy which drew its inspiration from this experience. The teaching of this phase had proved important and had enabled the movement to surpass the attitude of apparent unity which was in fact favourable to scission. It found itself in a position to denounce the separatist plan and the logic of fragmentation and was, as a result, ready to direct and deepen the struggle for unity during the following phase. It had, moreover, imposed the logic of unity and thoroughly consolidated its new foundations.

In his speech, Professor Michel 'Aflaq stated[144]:

144. *The Vanguard's Awareness,* Internal Periodic Bulletin Iraq: 1962.

"At the time of the fusion, the Party's integrity began to diminish on account of the contradictions from which it suffered. Some of those who assumed leadership believed that struggle should como to an end with the realization of unity, instead of assuming, along with the Party, even greater responsibility towards pressing unity onwards and avoiding the risk of deviation... The fusion of 1958 was in no way an adventure, but, on the contrary, the fruit of long drawn-out struggle, farther fetched than the frontiers of Syria alone... It came at an auspicious moment, and brought together the two countries most in favour of unity... The similarity between them was not the only motive that incited the Party to take action towards realizing unity. It was also drawn by the vast expanse of Egypt's territory and by its geographical situation. This great Arab Region, with all its immense potentialities, is the theatre of collisions between a civilization of the past and current social, national and political under-development. Egypt is, however, capable of playing a cardinal role in the struggle for Arab unity, even though it has a less complete understanding than any other country, of the real meaning of nationalism and Arab unity. It is indispensable that Egypt follow the historic trend of unity and the Arab Nation...

"The errors of 'Abd-al-Nasser and his regime are not alone responsible for unity's failure. All militants and fully-conscious movements bear part of the responsibility which both the leadership and members of the Party are called upon to assume...

"... It is for us to discriminate —and we insist on this point— between the failure of unity and the success of scission, which was simply the fruit of conspiracy. Unity was from the start, the victim of machinations and colonialist and reactionary interests, which never for a moment gave up trying to keep unity at bay.

"... Ours is the Party of unity, in its socialistic, democratic acceptance... It requires harsh effort and pitiless struggle.

"... Unity is a revolution, and the most difficult of all to bring about. It will eliminate a long-standing anomaly, it will triumph over regionalism, reaction and the hardened resistance of colonialism and certain eastern countries.

"... If the Ba'th is to remain the party of unity, it must assume its task with firm resolution and altruism. It must maintain this level, or there will no longer be a real Ba'th Party. A certain number of progressive reformist parties might, in various Regions, make use of the Ba'th's name; but it is evident that the existence of the revolutionary Ba'th Party depends on our ability to stay on this level.

"... What is essential is that the Party will conserve its unitary vocation. It must join the ranks of unity's partisans and assume their leadership. Unitarian forces must be victorious. In as far as we draw apart from unity, we deviate from socialism. From this day on it will be impossible for anyone to dissociate the aims — unity and socialism. We must, moreover, mobilize socialist unitarian forces to combat scission and reaction and retrieve the path traced for us by our ideology. Our task is to join the ranks of the people and engage in popular struggle. Without this, the Party will never be created."

It would appear from Professor Michel 'Aflaq's statements that the revolutionary movement's main and permanent preoccupation was the recovery of the experience of unity, despite the unprincipled stands, the divergence and opportunism which diminished the Arab field of action during this phase. The movement was equally called upon to make a scientific, objective examination of the experience, denounce its errors and

highlight its strong points. It had to consolidate its unitarian foundations, combat regionalist deviations, call to mind the historic principles of Arab revolutionary ideology and delineate the line of action to be followed by revolutionaries during this phase.

Arab revolutionary ideology made a study of the various elements arising out of the experience of unity and the disaster which provoked the scission, in order to organize Arab struggle. A new vision of things —a wider, more realistic, more penetrating vision— was clearly required. The policy concretizing the theory, strategy and tactics of unity in a practical manner was the one to follow. In this way, the soundness and authenticity of the contemporary Arab revolutionary path would be safeguarded.

After an interval of 4 years, the first issue of the Ba'th newspaper was published on July 21st, 1962. Professor Michel 'Aflaq took up once more the writing of the editorials. He re-examined the obvious facts of past experience and submitted them to scrupulous study and critical analysis, which all reflected the maturity of the new revolutionary, unitarian policy.

This issue clearly revealed the real face of the scission and denounced all the dangers which were far more serious than fragmentation. Comparison of fragmentation and scission showed Professor 'Aflaq the true dimension of the separatist conspiracy, a fact which only the Arab revolutionary movement perceived. The movement's vigilance and penetration showed that they were capable of foxing all conspiracies.

In the editorial of the issue under review, Professor 'Aflaq stated that[145]:

"The danger of scission comes from the fact that it prefaces a new situation and, by exploiting the failure of

145. *The Ba'th's Struggle,* 6th Edition, pp. 96-97.

the unitarian experience, asserts itself as a reality. It is not —as some would have us think— a return to the state of fragmentation which existed previous to unity. Fragmentation was then an evil to be eliminated as the consequence of popular awakening. It was not yet a deeply anchored condition. It was in opposition to the idea of unity and to the efficient, highly-resolved, courageous and coherent unitarian movement. Scission, on the other hand, represents a new type of fragmentation with its own laws, its own logic and its own justifications. Colonialism and Arab reaction are unifying their forces to prevent the realization of a new form of unity. They are trying to get the very idea of unity out of our minds and annihilate its forces, wherever they are to be found. Scission imposes fragmentation as a fact. The separatists are trying to exploit the failure of unity in order to undermine its foundations, prove that fragmentation is a practical fact and that the Arab Nation is condemned to go on living in this state of things for ever."

In this article, Professor 'Aflaq resumed his own attitude towards the scission, as follows:

"The Arab vanguard is called upon to take cognizange of its historic role and assume it. By becoming organized and engaging in strife for the last twenty years throughout the entire Arab Homeland, they have already proved their vigilance with this experience behind them; they have defied regionalism and opportunism and refused to be seduced by passing acquisitions. It would be totally abnormal if this vanguard were to lose faith in Arab unity or in the cohesion of its organization or in the unity of its fight. It is precisely the vanguard that will enable us to recover from this harsh defeat.

"... Throughout the entire Arab Homeland, colonialism and Zionism, in collaboration with reaction and

fanatics, are invoking the blunders of Nasser's regime as a pretext to cover up one of the darkest conspiracies in contemporary history, now being hatched against the Arab Nation. The aim of the plot is the atomization of the Nation from within by sowing discord, starting off internal conflicts and undermining the credibility of nationalist ideology by every possible means. However, our Arab revolutionary vanguard is ready to assume the historic responsibility and fox these hideous plots, and so enable our Nation to continue its triumphal march and realize its aims — unity, freedom and socialism. It is, therefore, our duty to make our meaning perfectly clear, to guarantee the vanguard's success and its victory in the fight to achieve these aims."

This clarification campaing, with the intention of defining the logic and events of the scission and the errors of past experience, thus offered us the means to fox separatist conspiracies and triumph over the crisis. It was primordial for the Arab revolutionary movement to transcend both of the tendencies hostiles to it — the separatist tendency on the one hand and, on the other, the unitarian tendency which had deviated from the path of democracy and socialism. At the end of the article under review, Professor Michel 'Aflaq made this clear:

"It is our vanguard's duty to engage in battle on two fronts. It must never, however, forget to show vigilance and altruism and so rise above the throng.

"It is by rising to a higher level that we can provide the answer to the separatist disaster. It is not enough to efface the stains of destructive scission. We must go to the very heart of the problem. We must analyse the reality of the Arab revolution before the advent of unity and satisfy the organic needs of Arab revolutionaries to

rise to a hitherto unknown theoretical and practical level."

This objective revolutionary and historic attitude which compels us to apprehend the crisis of the Arab revolution and puts the Arab revolutionary movement back onto the right road, has enabled the movement to deliver a dual fight, internally and externally, and to combat all divergent or hostile concepts and attitudes.

We should realize that the dark conspiracy aimed at the Arab revolution was intented to prevent the revolutionary movement and Arab unity from entering into a new phase. It sought, moreover, to culpabilize partisans of the revolution whose attitudes conformed to the logic and authenticity of historic revolutionary policy. It tried to hunt them down and persecute them.

All the efforts of the enemies of Arab revolution were in vain. So they took recourse to one of the most sinister impostures of contemporary history. They sought the help of mercenaries to wipe out the Arab revolutionary movement, to neutralize all the intellectual and ideological potentialities at its disposal and bring about the loss of its historic authenticity. A new band of enemies, this time from within the Nation, gave assistance to the enemy outside to carry out the above plan to annihilate the movement. Under the pretext of helping the movement to expand, and rectify its mistakes, they carried out their defamatory campaigns, in accordance with the methods recently perfected by neo-colonialism.

Chapter XIII

Arab Revolutionary Ideology and the Tripartite Unity Experiment

During the year 1963, new contradictions appear inside the Arab revolutionary movement. In the course of that year, revolutionary ideology enters a new phase, during which, certain changes can be perceived.

1963 was expected to be very favourable to a climate of revolutionary unity. Indeed, the working classes which yearn for unity, and the restitution of their hopes, were mobilized. The 14 "Ramadan" revolution in Iraq (corresponding to Feb. 8th, 1963 of our calendar) and the events of March 8th in Syria represented two promises, that reassured the masses and answered their expectations. These promising events were to modify the trends of the revolutionary movement and change its climate from a spirit of division to a spirit of unification.

Through these changes, the mistakes of autocratic power and dictatorship were to be eliminated and a transition to a mass regime was to take place in which the community as a whole was to participate.

However, shortly before the end of the year, these great hopes nourished by the masses were shattered once more because of the weakness of Arab revolutionary trends, and the lack of adequate solutions. Furthermore, the failure of the first unitary experiment in 1958, the

significance of which was clearly perceived, had been fatal. The rebellion of Nov. 18th, 1963 that weakened the Iraq Ramadan revolution, the Syrian rebellion of Feb. 23rd, 1966 as well as the 5th of June defeat revealed time and again those weak points that the Arab revolutionary movement had reflected and had failed to correct. They also indicated the adventuristic spirit of this movement, that can only entail disaster so long as it does not succeed in conforming with the objective and subjective conditions that warrant success.

Therefore we can assert that 1963 witnessed the birth of contradictions inherent to the new phase, the most important of which opposed:

1. The truly revolutionary tendency, based on those two historical forces which are Arab revolutionary ideology and the proletarian masses.
2. The autocratic tendency that nonetheless acted in the name of revolution, ideology and the revolutionary masses, and was based on armed violence and financial power.

We will also observe that the 1963 events did not provide the secessionist crisis with a sufficient answer and did not have the means to correct the mistakes of the unitary experiment. Indeed, the military bourgeoisie was not able to overcome these obstacles. On the contrary, all the advantages and all the effective revolutionary training resulting from these events were sacrificied in favour of the deviationists. Their craving for power led them to maintain their hold on the Arab revolutionary movement. They used the yearning of the masses for intellectual evolution as an ideological cover to conceal their deviationist intentions. They contrived the greatest treachery in the history of Arab contemporary revolution, in theoretical as well practical grounds.

As for the genuine revolutionaries, they undertook in

the IVth and Vth national congresses to examine the former phase so that they could track down the origins of the mismanagement and ensure that it would not be repeated. They proclaimed their unflinching attachment to the struggle for unity, the action of the masses, and to the strategic alliance of the different trends in Arab revolution... But, at the same time, the group that coveted autocratic power avoided this true revolutionary debate, left the battlefield, refused to reorganize itself, and to correct the course of the Arab revolutionary movement. This group drew support from the actual government which, because of its weakness, was limited to reforms on a regional level, and condemned to remain isolated from the masses. This government was unable to work outside its prescribed role to take advantage of the benefits of unitary policy and to play, during this phase, and important part in the revolutionary enterprise. As a matter of fact, the action of this group consisted in diverting the energies of the revolutionary movement in order to prevent it from correcting its mistakes. It wanted to prevent revolutionary action, to plot against the historical revolutionary movement, soul of the contemporary Arab movement. It wanted to distort Arab revolutionary thought and to keep the Arab revolutionary movement from playing its historical role and accomplishing its mission. Its aim was to enclose the movement within the limits of purely political action. It pursued private interests against the interests of the great majority, that of the nation represented by the proletarian masses, and the classes most exposed to poverty.

That is why we can say that the 1963 events were the beginning of an internal struggle within the Arab revolutionary movement: this struggle opposed the authentic militants, only concerned with historical action, and representing the interests of Arab proletariat to the

destructive forces which serve the interests of the new bourgeoisie, the offspring of power, who distorted revolutionary theory and persecuted authentic militants. The Ramadan revolution expressed the historical and collective will of the masses to avenge the murder of unity, to punish the secessionists, the deviationists, and to overthrow the dictatorship of autocratic power.

However, the authoritative tendency rapidly opposed this will by perverting the unitarian experiment and leading it to disaster. This faction, in effect, considered power to be an end in itself, and any method —Arab revolutionary ideology included— was good enough to conceal their devastating policy. That is why they used this ideology and this struggle to serve their own purposes.

The mistakes that were made during the attempt at unity were repeated. Contradictions continued to oppose theory and practice, the regime and the masses, authority and revolution, the lower and the higher levels of the movement, the ends and the means. This situation reflected the actual struggle of the Arab revolutionaries during this phase.

Following the logic of authoritarian power, the regime opened its doors to disloyal competition, internal struggle, corruption, conceit, naive futility, introversion, fanaticism, refusing any kind of dialogue, and constantly splitting up Arab forces. They used the sentimentalism of the people, their thoughtlessness to encourage irresponsibility and adventurism, in order that the Arab people's destiny remain subject to their whims.

Furthermore, this authoritative regime tolerated neither the remarks nor the criticism of the Arab revolutionary movement. They did not hesitate to silence any kind of criticism by arbitray means, corruption, terror, fallacy and deception. The politically aware elements of the regime were discarded. The authoritative regime

went as far as to betray the nation's past, the movement's founder, and the fighting masses who became, ultimately, the victims of its hatred and crimes.

These facts allow us to understand the various slogans that the right and the left both brandished during this period. We can also reveal certain schemes aiming to destroy the state. These schemes together with those of the imperialist, Zionist, and reactionary alliance consisted in the elimination of the historical movement of contemporary Arab revolution.

These facts also allow us to underscore a series of controversial issues, characteristic of these times:

1. The so-called action undertaken by the regionalist regime in favour of unity.

2. The revolutionary rhetoric which only shows the lack of determination and the disquieting compliance to colonialistic and Zionist schemes, and to international settlements.

3. The deceitful announcements of the privileged classes and the new ruling class —the military bourgeoisie— who claimed to represent the proletariat.

4. The treachery of the oppressors and supporters of censorship and violence who only saw in the people cheap manpower. While they were persecuting the militants, they pretended to give great importance to the masses.

5. The slogans calling for a so-called opening towards the progressive forces. They were brandished by the same ones who displayed outrageous arrogance and pride, and took refuge in isolationism and introversion.

6. A purely theoretical and verbal pretence towards marxism, hiding an actual hostility towards this doctrine, contempt for the revolutionary inheritance of the world, for the past experience of the Arab revolutionary movement and its ideology.

7. In the various speeches and broadcasts of the

time, one notes the frequent recurrence of lines such as "sacrifice", "mission", "self-denial", and "working for future generations". But this language was held by men who suffered from morbid narcissism, selfishness and were exclusively dedicated to their immeditate, private interests... They were insignificant and inexhaustible babblers.

8. Demanding respect of moral values at a time when anything was permitted. Furthermore, the government used the most sacred human values to justify its stripping man of all dignity and humanity.

9. The disguise of truth, by giving a revolutionary and progressive appearance to bigotry, tribalism, and old-fashioned ideas completely removed from the world, the century, and the present phase.

10. Substituting secondary for essential contradictions, confusing strategy and tactics, abandoning principle in favour of private interests, giving up central planning, an objective vision based on ideology in favour of improvisation and thoughtless reaction, all this permitted all imaginable contradictions.

And Arab revolutionary thought itself was also a victim of these contradictions.

In effect, the idea of unity from 1963 onwards was shaken by the achievements, of the regionalist regime as opposed to the unitary revolutionary mass movement, and by the internal quarrels of "revolutionary" forces, that rapidly became unreasonably important. Neither the Arab revolutionary ideology, nor its means and strategy were spared.

In light of observations prior to 1963, and consistent with the necessities of unitary struggle and Arab nationalism, we can measure what was achieved by the Arab revolutionary ideology and movement in the course of this phase.

One month after the outburst of the 14 Ramadan revolution and the fall of the secessionist regime in Syria, on March 8th, 1963, a return to Syro-Egyptian unity as opposed to unity with Iraq was being called for. This policy was only a sequel to the struggle between the two founding stones of the 1958 union: i.e. the Ba'th and Nasser. This struggle was aggravated by colonialism, Zionism, and conservatism. It was an urgent matter to denounce the aims of these campaigns because they lowered unity to the level of an intrigue. In the issues 15 and 16 of the "Ba'th" newspaper, dated March 14 and 15, 1963, the Arab revolutionary movement retorted as follows[146]:

"The policies consistent with the strategy of phases are the result of an objective analysis."

"They show us what problems we have to face in order to meet with the aims we have chosen for this phase. As for the unimportance of the outrageous slogans that have been brandished during this phase, we don't have to elaborate on them... We thus have to face the problem of unity as it appeared immediatly after the Feb. 8th outburst in Iraq and after the revolutionary 'coup' of March 8 in Syria... The slogans that favour unity between Egypt and Syria as opposed to the tripartite union with Iraq do not take into consideration the new objective conditions... At the end of the revolutionary experience in Iraq, the Syrian conservative forces made public the project of a union between Syria and Iraq. What they mainly wanted was to isolate Egypt. But the conscious unitary popular forces denounced the plot... Under these conditions, and considering the level of maturity reached by the struggle for unity in these countries, any slogan that would not immediately call for a tripartite union, would constitute a new effort tending

146. *The Ba'th's Struggle;* VI, pp. 135-139.

to rehabilitate the policy of the superpowers, imposed by colonialism and that the Arab people disapproved of... The achievement of tripartite union between Egypt, Syria, and Iraq is perfectly consistent with the necessities of the struggle in Algeria and in Yemen. It constitutes today's target for our fighting Arab nation."

Thanks to the unitary strategy that was elaborated during this phase, Arab revolutionary ideology was a perfect answer to the strategy of the superpowers. In an atmosphere laden with ominous rivalries, that encouraged petty infighting, the Arab revolutionary movement insisted on the necessity of bringing together the nationalistic forces... In effect, in issue no. 17, dated March 16th, 1963, we find the following article, entitled: "We must Strengthen Cooperation between the Unitary Forces"[147].

"The Revolution of March 8th is the outcome of a patriotic union, made of all the unitary socialist forces that opposed and fought secession so that it should be eliminated. These forces, having put an end to the treason of the secessionists, have the duty to consolidate their union and their patriotism, in order to join the people's struggle for unity. This will allow them to reach a new phase in the revolutionary process and to achieve a revolutionary target of the highest order, that is, the unification of the United Arab Republic, Iraq and Syria... The unitary forces have the duty to avoid any kind of breakup that could be taken advantage of by the enemies of unity."

In the 19th issue of the "Ba'th" newspaper, dated March 18th, 1963, the Arab revolutionary movement stresses the importance of tripartite union. The article

147. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 140-143.

says that the tripartite union is the central part of the whole stage. Under the title of "Unitary Socialist forces must Coordinate their Efforts", this paper stated:

"It is urgent and necessary for the revolutionary forces to fight constantly with all their might. They must reach a higher level of achievement and take a full and clear view of the situation we are now facing. The unification of Egypt and Syria in 1958 is a revolutionary experience; it shook the colonialist and conservative structure. Furthermore, the 14 Ramadan revolution in Iraq offered new perspectives to the unitary Arab struggle... Tripartite unity, and that only, is capable of preventing the encroachment of imperialist powers. As for Israel, it means the beginning of the end. Nothing can oppose unity. Tripartite unity will enforce itself in all Arabic regions and throughout the two greatest continents of the world. It will give a meaning to the struggle of Arabs from Asia and Africa, and will entail a considerable economic development... It answers the persistent demands of the masses... Let unitary and socialist forces coordinate their efforts and unite around this motto that reflects the objective conditions of the present unitary struggle."

We can thus observe that the Arab revolutionary movement, which enjoyed favourable conditions for nationalism in two neighbouring Arab countries, Syria and Iraq, fully exposed the theoretical and strategical points of view of unity. Unfortunately, these advantages were not followed by the expected results. But they allowed the movement to give a constructive direction the the struggle for unity, to change events in their favour, to further tripartite union, to isolate the policies of the big bloc, and to defeat the plots against unity. But, if these strong points were not followed by any effects, it is

mainly because they were considered as mere "semblances", "illusions"; they said more about the weakness than about the strenght of the movement. For these reasons, the Arab revolutionary movement was not able to enforce its views during this phase. It did not succeed in giving unity a new shape, in reasserting its basis. The weakness and the precariousness of the authoritative regime appeared soon enough and contributed, together with all the other obstacles provided by the enemies of unity, to hinder the progress of Arabs involved in the struggle and to deter them from their aims.

Let us sum up various ideas that were expressed during this period.

1. Some insisted upon the immediate restoration of the 1958 unitary formula. They considered the unification of Egypt and Syria as the only way of preventing new errors like the ones of the previous phase, and of avenging the nation for the disastrous secession.

2. Others thought they should overcome this view since it was dominated by subjectivism, neglectful of objective conditions and restricted to imaginative romanticism. Indeed this attitude did not take into consideration the teachings of past experiences and underestimated the necessity to seek the foundations that would ensure a new revolutionary unification.

3. The regionalist attitude accepted fragmentation and secession as an actual fact. In this way, it subscribed to the logic of authoritative regimes, that inspired these countries' behaviour. Indeed the governments of the three countries only supported regionalism, aggravated the disagreements, deepened their divisions, and prevented the achievement of the unitary ends that polarized the struggle of the masses.

Hence, we have a clear idea of this phase. On the other hand, the historical current that stemmed from the

Arab revolutionary movement insisted on this tripartite unity between Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. This was the expression of ideology as well as strategy, with a view towards consolidating the idea of unity on one hand and re-enforcing the struggle in its behalf, on the other. Following thereby the necessities of Arab revolutionary logic, and the history of its movement.

At the same time, the Arab revolutionary masses were imbued with this ideology and the unitary aims which answered the people's vital needs, and tried to eliminate the contradictions that tied the Arab nation's destiny to the colonialist, Zionist, and conservative alliance.

As for the regimes that held power in the name of revolutionary ideology and the Arab proletariat, they were inspired by regionalist attiutudes and remained faithful to the interests of the ruling classes. The men in charge were always talking of the problem of unity but at the same time did everything in their power to dismantle it, and suppress the challenge it represented. This unity for the achievement of which we sacrificed so much and made so many efforts.

These regimes always wore a mask, to hide their deceitfulness and their real intentions. They considered the installation of their dictatorship as the beginning of the real struggle. They contrived to distort reality. They attempted to suppress the truth and did their best to restrain the genuine revolutionary currents, that of history and of the masses.

The regionalist government made a systematic use of lying. It was the only thing they could do, it was their sole justification. Falsification guaranteed perpetuity. That is why they monopolized the communication systems, made use of financial power and spread terror.

But the movement is a historical current in perpetual evolution. There was a double intrigue directed against

it: from the external enemy and from the internal one. Arab revolutionary ideology itself was not spared by these despicable plots. The strength of its past aroused the hatred of its enemies. They wanted to undermine and weaken it, and provoke new contradictions. Indeed, the supporters of regionalism took advantage of the movement's history to win power. But the revolutionary movement, with all strength of its past and its principles, did not fail to denounce their anti-unitary reformism, despite their deceitful announcements. This past was the result of the organized struggle of all the people. It belongs to the masses. Their repression was the only way in which the regionalists could assert their power and conceal the truth. This was the weak point that allowed us to denounce their deception and deviationism.

During this phase, the Arab revolutionary movement was reduced to the expression of its views, without being able to act in any way. Indeed, the regionalist regimes took a fraudulous advantage of the spirit of the movement in order to build up their own image. At the same time they were plotting its destruction. And the articles of the "Ba'th" newspaper did not hesitate to denounce these methods.

On March 30th, 1963, under the title "Revolutionary Unity", the "Ba'th" retorted:

"The true revolutionary draws his strength from the masses in order to enrich them and to guide them. They allow him to deepen his knowledge by this enlightening contact. It is his duty to let the masses follow their natural course and to transform their naive spontaneity into a clear, objective and realistic awareness. The revolutionary 'avant-garde' and the people should walk together. The former must not overtake the latter... In order to spare the people any new surprise or new '28th of September', we need:

1. A tripartite union between the United Arab Republic, Iraq, and Syria.

2. A unified leadership such as is indispensable to this union.

3. A revolutionary mass organization that will protect this union.

This is the heart of the matter. Any attempt to formulate the problem in other terms can only be an incorrect, unfair, and mistaken attitude."

The article then defines what must be the form of the union:

"Federal union entails an effort of decentralization, the only scientific policy consistent with the necessities of a popular democracy... This unitary federal system is not an intermediary stage. It does not reconcile two opposed parties. To be precise, it consists of a revolutionary slogan reflecting the awareness of the people and is the embodiment of the needs and condition of the actual stage."

The 24th issue of the "Ba'th" quoted the statement announcing the end of the Cairo meetings. It underlined "the concrete responsibilities that allowed the achievement of a federal union worthy of the name, between the three countries". It criticized rigorously the proposition, so often repeated, of a union between Egypt and Syria, excluding Iraq. It qualified it as a new secessionist attempt, without omitting to supply the following answer[148]:

"If our Party had been exclusively concerned with short-term interests, union between Syria and Iraq would have simply meant a way of reasserting its national

148. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 148-149.

credibility. But we never underestimated the United Arab Republic's importance. We never for a second observed the role the United Arab Republic can play in the Arab struggle. We are firmly convinced that Egypt must take the lead in the struggle for unity of which it is the heart. But a new secession is threatening us once more. Therefore our duty lies in fighting with accuracy and determination the secessionists' plans."

At the end of many meetings and in spite of the difficulties and of the attitude of the opponents, the Arab revolutionary movement was able to work out a basic plan for the achievement of a tripartite union. But the search for this unity through a democratic formula did not fail to create other problems. Nevertheless, the revolutionary movement stopped at nothing in order to repeat its former success and have the leaders of the three countries sign a second tripartite union. Indeed, the movement always remained faithful to its principles and to its revolutionary spirit, in order to raise unity to a higher level of maturity and allow it to grow and to progress.

On April 2nd, 1963, the "Ba'th" issued an article entitled "The Path of Unity":

"Unity —tripartite unity— has become a vital necessity on which our future depends. Nothing will deter us from it. Squabbles and dangers can neither stop us nor bar the route to unity. We need not worry about small details, because we experienced the problems of unity from the first day our Party existed... Fear is no longer an obstacle, and will not prevent us from joining the other unitary forces... Secondary problems will not stop us... We always acted in this way and will never change... We have never been so attached to tripartite unity... We have never been so convinced that it is

indispensable. What we mean by a federal union is a regime representative of an internationally unique and sovereign state that would be in charge of political, economic, cultural, and military affairs. Thus it will endow this union with unlimited efficiency and strength... Federal union will give unity a democratic and popular meaning because it entails decentralization. As for the People's Council's of these countries, they will lay the foundation for the future Arab State."

Various forms of agitation campaigns appeared: destructive slogans brandished by a party or an unorganized group, calling for an effective kind of union (Syro-Egyptian); mottos such as "the people are the supreme guide", as an answer to the call for a popular leadership and the organization of a revolutionary avant-garde, etc... All these slogans unveiled the regionalistic government's aims, trying to raise obstacles to and undermine the basis of unity.

But the revolutionary movement, with the help of the masses, succeeded in imposing its historical will and enforcing it on the regionalist government, which was thus compelled to take up practical matters, only to give them up as quickly as possible. They also felt compelled to sign the Tripartite Union Pact, known as the 17th of April Pact.

If we follow the events that happened during that period, we notice that they neglected the struggle opposing mainly:

1. Arab revolutionary ideology and its principles, referred to by the Arab revolutionary movement, and inspiration of the unitary struggle, symbol of the logical breach between unitary thought and Arab proletarian masses, who were the ones to enforce tripartite unity on the government.

2. Regionalist authorities, who exercised power in

the name of Arab revolutionary thought. But their acts contradicted their words: they furthered dissension in the ranks of the supporters of unity so as to impede any kind of effective progress towards that goal.

3. Colonialist, Zionist, and conservative forces, who banded together against unitary thought.

4. The friendly socialist states and the communist faction of the other regions, whose attitude on behalf of unity was uncertain and tainted by indifference or negativism.

The announcement of the tripartite union, in the terms of the 17th of April Pact, was an act of allegiance to the historical trend of Arab revolutionary ideology and to its scientific revolutionary line, consistent with the laws of the present stage. In other words, it corresponded to the Arab proletarian masses' evolution and to the level of maturity they had reached. These facts were mentioned in the 17th of April Pact preamble:

"The talks of the three delegations representing the United Arab Republic, Syria, and Iraq made it clear that they were convinced of the indisputable necessity of unity. Furthermore, they won the approval of the Arab proletarian masses, who fought and sacrificed so much to achieve and preserve unity... In the course of this meeting, it was stressed once again that unity can only be the result of a revolutionary action inspired by the faith of the masses and their yearning for liberty and socialism. Unity is a revolution, because it can only be of a popular and progressive nature. On its behalf we feel compelled to follow the rapid and persistent development of civilization. The Palestinian cause is closely linked to the cause of unity because unity allows us to fulfill our national duty and to struggle for the liberation of Palestine. The Palestinian disaster has clearly indicated

us the way to salvation, unity, liberty, and socialism... Unity marks the way for the popular struggle. It is one of the people's weapons to maintain and pursue the revolutionary current's impetus. That is why it will remain faithful to its principles, will avoid mistakes, and continue to inspire the great Arab nation."

Others consider that the 17th of April Pact is the kind of document that will multiply contradictions, not only between the regionalist authorities who signed it but also between the popular revolutionaries and the leaders. In other words, it would reveal the contradictions between what ought to be done and what actually took place.

The political, social, and economical principles on which this fact was based, as well as the shape of the Federal state and its institutions seem to reflect the contradictions of the parties who conceived the pact rather than the spirit of the preamble.

The "Ba'th" issue no. 46, of April 18th, 1963 expresses the point of view of the Arab revolutionary movement on this matter[149]:

"This historical announcement marks the start of a new era for the unitary struggle". It is a starting point. "It will require from the masses, their parties and revolutionary organizations a higher level of consciousness and responsibility, in order to achieve unity on a democratic and socialist basis."

The Arab revolutionary movement feared two types of threats to the pact:

1. The lack of anything concrete on a practical level will endanger the survival of unity.
2. The distortion of unity by failing to respect the

149. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 166.

socialist and democratic principles that guarantee its development in the whole of the Arab homeland.

This is why the movement insisted in this article, on the necessity of creating awareness in the masses and making them capable of understanding clearly the contents of the pact, in order to counter these two threats.

The newspaper "Ba'th" contributed as much as possible to this clarification campaign. In its issues 47, 48, and 50 it underlined the form that a tripartite union might take, that is to say a national front composed of unitary forces and organizations and that would guarantee their effective influence in government, policy making, and decision making. It drew the consequences of the practical application of these principles and denounced the irresponsible attitudes and the destructive undertakings aiming at overthrowing the unitary regime. Furthermore, it insisted on the necessity of creating an atmosphere favourable to a strong alliance of unitary revolutionary forces and of remaining faithful to the principles of democracy and socialism, because they are the only strong basis for the fight against colonialism and conservatism which consider the edification of a Federal state as a threat to their interests and the ruin of their hopes.

The newspaper "Ba'th" did not only clarify the contents of the announcement of the tripartite federal union. It also gave a description of the shape this unitary operation will take, that is, the relationships between the two main revolutionary forces: the Arab and socialist Ba'th and the Egyptian National Command headed by Gamal 'Abd-al-Nasser.

In the 67th issue, we find an article entitled: "Cooperation between the Party and Cairo is a Vital Neces-

sity", showing how vital it was to the Arab revolutionary movement:

"After meeting President 'Abd-al-Nasser for the first time, the Arab and socialist Ba'th's delegation, the first revolutionary force in the fight against colonialism, and more precisely against the Bagdad coalition, this delegation realized the importance of cooperation between these two revolutionary forces in their common fight. This cooperation gives us the means to fight back against colonialist forces, and shows the Arab people the way towards unity. It is only within the framework of militantism that unity will ever come into being. The achievement of unity in 1958 was the result of the absolute confidence we had in this cooperation. It is necessary, guaranteeing the success of the Arab cause, and the construction of Arab unity... But, during this unitary experiment some very unfortunate quarrels broke out from which the Arab struggle as a whole still suffers the consequences. In spite of this, we thought that these quarrels were insignificant compared with the importance of the supreme Arab cause, the cause of unity. Even at the acme of the argument, we stuck to the strong conviction that this cooperation was necessary, and even indispensable. This conviction never lessened. We do not exaggerate when we say that it is mainly the removal of the Party from the political scene, after the 1958 unity that allowed the secessionists to perpetrate their crime in 1963. In the same way, our fierce disapproval of secession and the attitude we adopted showed how strongly we believed that it was possible to cooperate with President Gamal 'Abd-al-Nasser in the revolutionary fight... The antisecessionist line in the party demands first of all that the United Arab Republic be set free from the enemies that encircle it. The 14 Ramadan revolution in Iraq put an end to the conservative state of

siege that entailed the fall of the United Arab Republic...

"On Feb. 22nd, 1963, a party delegation went to Cairo to express its sincere and unconditional support to the Arab revolution of July 23rd. The 17April agreement well illustrated the mood of cooperation of those revolutionary meetings. The extreme eagerness with which we want, as a revolutionary force, to cooperate effectively and loyally with 'Abd-al-Nasser whom we trust, will contribute to give a new form to the Arab revolutionary experiment."

Ever since the failure of the 1958 unification, the new unitary policy suggested by this article, has always been the main concern of Arab revolutionary ideology. The Arab revolutionary movement was to go on with its struggle in order to reach the stage of realization, keeping in mind the teachings of the first unitary experiment, the more so as conditions were favourable. Besides, the movement realized what constituted the aims of inside and outside enemies, who were ready to attempt anything in order to impede the achievement of a unity that threatened the interests of the imperialist, Zionist, and conservative coalition. The only way to fight was to denounce the facts. Insisting on the necessity of a close and unconditional cooperation with 'Abd-al-Nasser was a good way to counter the plot aiming at destroying the two main unitary forces of that phase. Equally great importance was given to the organization of a national front and to the fact that all the quarrels, divisions, and rivalries of the Arab revolutionary forces ought to be given up. This fully answered the major concern of Arab revolutionary ideology during this stage.

The newspaper "Ba'th" published in its 75th issue, of May 18th, 1963, an article entitled: "Unitary action requires a close cooperation between the authentic revolutionaries". It defined the nature of the present

stage and denounced the plots of the colonialists and of the new subversive and falsifying elements. It drew the practical consequences of the unitary confrontation and defined its necessities in order to achieve the tasks of the present stage[150]:

"For years now because of the progress of the masses and the intensity of the struggle for liberation, the Arab fight does not oppose progressists and conservatists any longer; it distinguishes the authentic and progressive revolutionary forces from the false ones, who try to prevent revolution and take advantage of the powerful advancement of the masses... These people's endeavours are used by the conservative colonialist and zionist forces, as well as by all the other movements which are hostile to the aims of the Arab nation; they betrayed revolution and fought against popular initiative, in order to prevent the outburst of this radical revolution and to endanger the very existence of the Arabs... During the present stage marked by the progression of the Arab revolutionary movement, the growth of its revolutionary spirit has become the most important weapon in the hands of its enemies, who want to stop this progression and destroy the movement from the inside. The movement's opponents did not hesitate to use these elements, very similar in their makeup and their aims, to the conservative colonialist agents... But having failed to stop the masses' progress towards Arab unity, that gravely endangers colonialism and Israel, the colonialist conservative and Zionist forces turned to other methods. These methods consisted in destroying unity in the name of unity and in distorting revolution in the name of revolution... An Arab revolutionary movement, throughout the whole Arab nation, and particularly within the tripartite union must absolutely baffle the imperialist-

150. Id: *Ibid;* 11. 176-282.

conservative conspiracy... What is at stake today in the Arab's struggle is the edification of a popular structure, genuinely revolutionary, that would guarantee the achievement of unity and socialism. Every day, every mistake can seriosly threaten the progress of the masses towards unity and liberation."

In this way, and thanks to its shrewd insights, Arab revolutionary ideology developed, and became clearly conscious, among other things, of the close relationship that exists between theory, strategy, and tactics. Furthermore, it took advantage of past experiences, and realized the necessity of baffling the enemy's plans.

The events of the late sixties proved how right and how shrewd Arab ideology had been in its views. But the surprising fact remained that these sudden events deeply shook the Arab nation. Indeed, the defeat of June marked a turning point in Arab revolutionary struggle.

Less than one month after the above article was published, and on the 11th anniversary of the revolution of July 23rd, 'Abd-al-Nasser announced the withdrawal of Egypt from the 17 of April Pact. In this way, he diverted our attention from the essential struggle and the main contradictions that opposed us to the enemies of Arab revolution, and obliged us to worry about the internal struggle between Arab revolutionary forces. The slogan "No unity with Ba'th", answering "No unity with 'Abd-al-Nasser" brandished by the Syrian secessionists sealed the end of unity.

On Sept. 17th, 1963, the date of the referendum on tripartite union, the National Command made an announcement in which the Arab revolutionary movement, addressing the people, expressed its point of view on the new situation following the collapse of unity[151].

151. Id: *Ibid;* 11. 195-201.

"These events enable us to make a great dream come true, and to lay the basis of a socialist, democratic, and unified Arab society. This day is a great day. It gives us the impulse to go further on in the battle for the liberation of Palestine and against the Zionist occupation and domination. It is a decisive turning point in the history of the Arab nation... The Pact of April 17 faced 'Abd-al-Nasser with a dilemma: either he accepted tripartite unity which meant he would be obliged to change his policy, to usher in a new era, to arouse the awareness of the masses and to turn them into an organised and active force, with power over governmental policy, or else he kept his position. It would then allow conservatism and colonialism to destroy unity. In the latter case, he would reject tripartite unity and would withdraw from the 17 April Pact. President 'Abd-al-Nasser chose the second solution... Allowing ourselves to be disheartened by defeat is not a revolutionary attitude, rather an irresponsible one. Faced with deviationism and disaster, we must intensify the struggle and be increasingly watchful... The revolution of Ramadan 14 and March 8 must allow us to realize the 17th of April Pact. These revolutions help us in the determination of carrying out the terms of this pact quickly and effectively."

It was the Arab revolutionary ideological resolutions that were to give us the means of escaping a new disaster: a more intensive struggle, leading to the achievement of unity and the immediate practical application of the 17th of April Pact in Syria and Iraq. Unfortunately, the intrigues of inside and outside enemies defeated the unitary struggle until the end of this phase.

The Party's VIth National Congress took place under these conditions between the 5th and 23rd of Oct. 1963. In those days, the Party was going through an internal crisis, due to the grave consequences of the failure of

Arab revolution. There only remained for Arab ideology to search for the means of overcoming this crisis and to denounce the elements which created strife and trouble among the supporters of unity.

Nevertheless, Arab revolutionary ideology itself did not escape this crisis, after the debasement campaigns that did not fail to pervert its spirit. Indeed we had neither the time to think over our Arab revolutionary theory, nor the initiative to conduct a self-critique which would have deepened our analysis, enriched our thought, and drawn out new conceptions. Just as we were getting down to these intellectual tasks in order to change our way of examining the Arab situation and the contradictions inherent in the present phase, and to work out new means of fighting our enemies, they took advantage of these hopes and of these efforts in order to defeat Arab revolutionary ideology, to distort its principles and to deprive it of its authenticity.

Even during the Congress, these endeavours were encouraged by the regionalists who wanted to sever the Arab revolutionary movement from its spiritual and historical roots, to defeat revolution by using it for the benefit of the actual government. But they failed. The historical revolutionary movement maintained the Party's line, but it was not able to reconcile the theoretical necessities of the proclamation and the practical ones of the preamble, neither did it reduce the interval that occasionally separated them.

Arab revolutionary ideology had the duty to criticize and to revise the theoretical and practical experience of the Arab movement, so as to work out new theoretical goals and a new strategy allowing it to develop effectively. But this was made impossible during the VIth Congress, owing to the fact that the movement was then obliged to protect ideology from its enemies instead of permitting its development.

This is why the preamble inspired by the central scientific and revolutionary principles of Arab revolutionary ideology, insisted on the difference between a scientific outlook and a pseudo-scientific one. The preamble stressed that by accepting a scientific outlook and rejecting compromise and pseudoscience, Arab revolutionary ideology was able to follow a scientific cause that revealed the true aspects of Arab reality.

In this way it underlined the revolutionary, liberating, and progressive character of nationalism in the Arab homeland, in Asia, and in Africa... The needs of the Arab nation, its links with the theory of revolution, and its denial of reformism... The historical role of proletarian masses in occupied, divided, and underdeveloped countries. Arab revolutionary ideology established the link between the nationalist liberation struggle and the class conflict. It defined the masses' aims, and the constant struggle for unity, inseparable from the struggle for liberty and socialism... Furthermore, ideology needs to adapt the means to fulfill its stated ends. In this way we will accomplish our mission and realise our hopes for the Arab future.

The preamble also insisted on the moral values that must inspire our struggle and our action. It denounced the perverted methods that could lead the Party to its ruin:

"The moral values and the sincerity that must inspire our struggle will protect the Party from its enemies and allow us to keep it altive."

"To eliminate contradictions within the Party, we must have an active relationship with the other forces. We therefore aim towards the unification of the different forces so as to lead the Arab movement to progress... It is the only way to see our Party through its present difficulties, to prevent any bad surprise and to prepare

for the battles on which depend Arab masses and the destiny of their revolution."

But the events of the regionalist Congress in Iraq, which was held after the VIth National Congress, and became known as the "Machine-Gun Congress", entailed the disaster of Nov. 18th, 1963... And the events of Feb. 23, 1966 unveiled the new methods of the conspirators which had in mind the defeat of Arab revolutionary ideology and of the historical revolutionary movement.

In spite of this, the VIth National Congress was marked by long discussions that illustrated three different ideological trends:

The first trend was that of the last survivors of the reactionary right; it was founded on the erroneous conception of the logical link between nationalism and socialism. The second trend was that of the opportunists and regionalist supporters. They pretended to belong to the left, not at all in order to fight the first trend, but to pervert the Party's ideology, its nationalist and liberating spirit, to attack its revolutionary ethics, and to prevent it from playing its historical role and use it in order to win power. As for the third trend, it represented the genuine thought of the Party, open to all new ideas, conscious of the importance of its theory and of its scientific and revolutionary character. This third trend strongly opposed the deviationist models.

The VIth National Congress managed to define the Party's duties and its ideological role. It had to prevent any attempt at distortion and deviationism. It had to define its theory and elaborate upon it. The Party mainly revised Arab revolutionary and nationalist concepts and the theory of Arab unity. It pointed out its negative and positive aspects. Furthermore, it defined its basic principles.

As for the chapter concerning the theoretical prin-

ciples of Arab unity, it defined and stressed the four following points:

1. Establish the priority of unity over liberty and socialism, and insist on its eminently moral character.
2. Give unity its truly revolutionary meaning: liberation and socialism.
3. Link the struggles for nationalism and socialism.
4. Realize nationalism by setting up an organization on the national level.

On the other hand, the Party outlined the negative aspects of the principles it followed during the former phase:

1. The Party was not able to establish a theoretical model pointing the way towards unity, defining the means of achieving it, warranting protection and progress.
2. Any kind of carelessness or improvisation in dealing with the problem of unity will be considered as a deviationist act. As long as it is not given absolute priority unity will be endangered. The absence of a satisfactory theory forced the Party to give in to improvisation and the unpredictable dangers it entails.
3. In a certain number of writings, the Party gave an idealistic picture of nationalism, that allowed an interpretation somewhat unscientifically formulated and contrary to historical evolution; it did not mention class conflict as the true element of Arab Nationalism and the basic principle of the national struggle.

As for the third and last chapter, devoted to the research of the theoretical principles of Arab unity, it defined the social content of the Arab nationalist movement. Indeed, according to its theoretical principles, Arab unity "is a theory that can do without any form of demonstration. It is a reality that gives a true impetus to

Arab masses, from the gulf to the ocean". We can thus deduct from the true evolution of Arab struggle the following three essential truths:

1. Arab nationalist struggle was engaged against colonialism, responsible for the Arab fragmentation and feudality, a backwards production system, and a political class at the heel of the colonialists and local bourgeoisie, created from the contradictions of regionalism... This struggle carried out for Arab unity, expressed the masses' needs and yearning for liberation. Therefore it was bound to become a democratic and socialist struggle

2. In order that the unitary movement should be able to progress, we must be concerned with objective data, so as to be able to outline the path and chart the organization of this unity. Subjectivism and sentimentalism are no longer sufficient to impose a unity capable of facing colonialism and class enemies inside the nation. Unity must be based on democracy, on scientific socialist trends and the effective and active participation of organized masses. The unitary masses' struggle is the underlying force of socialism as well as of unity.

3. For the Arab people who are fighting for life against old and new forms of colonialism and against Israel, instrument of imperialism, unity has become an urgent necessity. It will allow the Arabs to follow revolutionary principles and to have a revolutionary policy on the international scene, and fight against underdevelopment. It is an essential element in view of preparing objective conditions for a powerful economy, a dynamic industry, progressive and modern, and the fast development of the bulk of Arab economy. In this way we will be able to face the challenges of the new industrial revolution.

4. Socialism is the realistic element of Arab unity. The two causes are inseparable, historically and economically. Unity, thanks to its perceptible evolution, is at

the same time a nationalist, socialist, and democratic revolution.

5. Arabs are one nation. As a consequence, Arab unity must be total, and must inspire the unitary struggle. For unity to be perfect and effective we must possess a powerful leadership, competent in political, military, economic, and cultural matters. Furthermore, this unity requires a local decentralization; but this decentralization must concern production and socio-economic structures, and not stress artificial geographical parcellings.

6. What is at stake in the achievement of unity, is the unification of the objective revolutionary forces it entails, of the organized masses, and avant-garde forces directly in contact with the masses' struggle. Unity is the supreme reward of the Arab revolutionary struggle, the result of the collective effort of the different forces and of the Arab revolutionary experiments.

7. The strategy of stages, which guides the struggle for unity, considers partial unity as an intermediary phase, prior to total unity. Therefore, the next task is to create new conditions allowing new unitary progress.

These are the main trends of the theoretical principles adopted by the VIth National Congress. It seems they allowed a clear definition of the nationalist revolutionary ideology. Furthermore, they express the links between theory and strategy, because the Arab revolutionary movement was then under a double pressure: on one hand, it had to answer the necessities of theoretical evolution, and on the other, it had to elaborate on appropiate strategy to face the complex conditions of the time.

Also, while defining and specifying the evolution of the nationalist concept, the VIth National Congress

answered the three following questions, concerning its new strategy:

1. What attitude must we adopt towards the Nasser regime after Egypt's withdrawal from the 17th April Pact?

2. What will be the Arab revolutionary movement's attitude after the failure of tripartite unity?

3. What kind of relations will there be between the Party as a national organization, and the regionalist regime that is governing in the name of the Party?

The VIth Congress did not fail to answer:

1. The Congress has declared that the nature of the Nasser regime, as well as the dictatorial and autocratic methods of government of 'Abd-al-Nasser, have involved the Party in a struggle that should have been avoided. Furthermore, the present conditions of the Arab struggle make it necessary for the fight to stop, in order that all the liberation movements throughout the Arab homeland find a meeting ground. The Congress also insisted on the importance, moral and material, of the United Arab Republic, and of the part this country can play in the achievement of unity: It defined the kind of attitude the Nasser regime should adopt to correct its errors and reconcile the various types of Arab experiments: Namely, participation. According to the directions of the Congress the Nasser regime will only participate in the achievement of unity, as opposed to laying its theoretical foundation.

2. After Cairo's withdrawal from the 17th of April Pact, the Congress, in its resolution, adopted the principle of a bipartite union between Syria and Iraq, on the basis of a federal union. This union should be open to any initiative on a national scale. Likewise, if Egypt wants to join the new federal state, on the basis of the equality of the different regions and the communal and

democratic handling of governmental tasks of the union, it would contribute an important step on the path to unity.

3. As for the relations between the Party and the government, the Congress adopted the principle of the absolute separation between the Party and the State. We were warned against the government's subjection of the party and against opportunist elements' attempts to infiltrate our ranks. We were induced to prevent party members from being tempted by the exercise of power, thus contributing to their ideological prestige, but gravely endangering the principles and ethics of the Party. According to the resolution of the Congress, the Party must assume the leadership of political affairs and indicate the several trends of government policy. The Congress also asked of the leaders of the groups that they dedicate themselves to the party's work. It also gave the masses the right to criticise the Party and control its members, so that mistakes could be corrected and an active relationship maintained between the Party, the government, and the masses. This attitude will put an end to the government's policy of repression, to autocratic methods, and to the bourgeois trends that might appear within the party.

Such was the resolution of Arab revolutionary ideology, concerning the theory and practical application of nationalistic principles.

But unfortunately, the regionalist regime was unable to conform with the ideological resolutions and with the advice of the VIth National Congress, which explains the series of crises that followed until the end of the sixties.

Chapter XIV

The Period of Crises

Between 1963 and the 1967 defeat, the revolutionary ideology had to cope with the consequences of the disaster which had befallen the Ramadan Revolution. It had to consider the next stage in the light of past experience, the scientific analysis of the causes of the disaster and the lessons to be learned from it. In addition, it had to place the results of this critical analysis at the service of the Syrian experiment so as to eliminate the risk of another crisis, to ensure that it would not have a direct and damaging influence on the revolutionary movement and, most of all, to prevent it from impeding its promotion of unity.

The VIIth National Congress was held in April 1964, four months after the November 18th disaster and at the height of the crisis in which the proponents of reforms were pitted against groups engaged in an internal power struggle. These groups, indeed, tried to silence anyone likely to correct the mistakes. They set off internal struggles, brandishing right-wing slogans at one time or left-wing slogans at another. They decried the Party's values, its past and its achievements and tried to head off the National Congress so as to prevent a showdown with the rank-and-file. In this way, they could force the

Congress to resolve a new crisis intended as a diversion, which would hamper the Ramadan experiment and prevent it from succeeding.

National action consequently remained a captive of regional crises, with historic action sacrificed to the adventurism of authoritarian power. The latter did indeed succeed in hampering the realization of unity by triggering crises which enabled it to foment plots against the Party standing for unity. Simultaneously the forces of the Arab revolution entered on a period of widespread crisis that was concealed by an organized uproar and news campaigns designed to create an illusion about their real strength and to touch off imaginary confrontations. The campaigns misrepresented the actual situation the better to conceal it, twisting the truth and sowing confusion in people's minds. Even the obvious became unreliable and was even ignored. The skilfully organized campaign of misrepresentation chose the Arab revolutionary movement and its ideology itself as its target. This campaign caused the movement to resort to strange expedients in its revolutionary action so as to prevent Arab revolutionary thought from being perverted. The Party expected support from the government in place. But instead of providing it with the wherewithal for straightening out the situation, the authorities did everything possible to stab it in the back and betray it, following a struggle which lasted three years, that is, from 18 November, 1963, when the first uprising took place to the coup d'état of 23 February, 1966.

These were three years of struggle between nationalists and regionalists, between the advocates of authentic unity and vestigial separatism, between the revolutionary Arab movement and the regime exercising power in its name.

Speaking on 2 February, 1964 at an extraordinary regional congress held in Syria shortly after the VIIth

National Congress, Professor Michel 'Aflaq condemned these conspiracies and the atmosphere they had created:

"The misrepresentation campaigns have reached such a pitch that, unfortunately, lawful initiatives and measures in the interest of the Party, indeed of the country and the people, like the cries of distress appealing for protection of the country and the Party from a new disaster and a vertiginous slump, have been branded as the manipulations of individuals. After the disaster that struck Iraq, isn't it obvious that we should ask the members of the Party to get together and look for the causes of this disaster? Must they not draw up a plan capable of sparing the country and the Party further disastrous crises, which are inevitable so long as mistakes continue to be repeated with impunity?... Who could question the need for calling a National Congress after such serious events?... It is so obvious..."

In a beseeching voice charged with reproach that reminded us of our obligations, Professor 'Aflaq continued:

"The potential of an entire people has been sacrificed and the character of the internal regime is there to attest to it. After this disaster, the members of the Party are called upon to examine the regime's features and analyse their situation. Let them afterwards decide on their own whether they should let their Party and their people continue along this road..."

He then reminded them that the disaster struck Iraq "almost immediately after the National Congress —the sixth— was held. The VIth Congress lasted a fortnight and even longer. Everything was done there to put the Party on its guard against certain grave political consequences and methods inevitable leading to the present

situation. But the warnings went unheeded for reasons we are not unaware of."

He also drew attention to the dimensions that the misrepresentation campaigns had acquired. They had managed to pervert Arab revolutionary ideology and create a reckless state of mind favourable to the ruling regime. They attempted to blank out the Arab revolutionary movement's past record so as to give the impression that the Party's revolutionary history began with the military coups d'état. Consequently, the historic current trying to correct the mistakes had no alternative but to condemn attempts to bring off a coup within the Party, as well as the campaigns of misrepresentation and the falsehoods.

Professor 'Aflaq roundly condemned these endeavours and went on to explain the depths to which the authoritarian tendency had sunk:

"In my opinion, the revolution requires the revolutionaries to be constantly on their guard during the first five years. At no time must they leave their places of work... Our enthusiasm for the revolution obliges us to do this. Unfortunately, we notice that this attitude hasn't been adopted... They let themselves be seduced by power and victory... The Party adopted a strange attitude, becoming clannish and interested solely in exploiting the internal regime. Taken in by the appearances and the pedantry, it became enmeshed in intrigue... It is a matter of regret that Ba'thists should turn into this sort of creature... Right from its inception, our Party stood out for its sincerity and simplicity, which we can scarcely do without. In the course of the past few months, this Party and its ideology have come under bitter attacks that break my heart. They have been debased by the most influential leaders... Yet, it is this ideology which put them into top jobs and positions of power..."

Professor 'Aflaq also made a point of answering those who exploited Marxism, making use of it to cover up the instincts of the ruling class, its hunger for power and obsession with prestige and everything that is alien to Marxism and the spirit and moral principles of the struggle:

"I am not against Marxism. But the Ba'th prefers a more vigorous scientific socialism... I don't know how the average Arab will react when he hears of the slanderous attacks and accusations made against the Party in return for the services it has given during the 24 years of its existence..."

Considering the climate in which it took place, this congress could neither analyse the reasons for the disaster that dammed up the tide of unity's supporters nor discover what made fighting Iraq withdraw into itself after the November 1963 disaster, confining itself to purely formal, artificial and verbal appeals to political unity. Indeed, these appeals did not do away with the regime's contradictions, for while it kept putting out calls to unity it unhesitatingly threw the proponents and activists of unity into jail. This kind of contradiction was of course one of the most outstanding in this period of crises which began with the abortive merger of 1958 and lasted until the defeat of June 1967. The advocates of unity were got rid of in the name of unity, the Ba'th undermined in the name of the Ba'th, the united movement for liberation and genuine socialism opposed in the name of Arab revolutionary ideology.

The situation reached its worst point before we could celebrate the anniversary of the Ramadan Revolution. But the occasion enabled us to define exactly where the Arab revolutionary movement stood in relation to the plans prepared by the conspirators for countering the

revolutionary ideology and the nationalist organization and barring any political and ideological struggle based on unity.

On this occasion —8 February, 1965— Professor 'Aflaq gave a speech in which he pointed out the practical consequences of the obvious crisis. He examined the mistakes committed during the '60s, either by the Arab revolution as a whole or by the revolutionary movement in particular. These are the mistakes which have always helped the enemies of the Arab revolution to devise plans —even today— to halt its progress, misdirect it and wipe out the revolutionary movement. In his speech, Professor 'Aflaq tried to draw the relevant lessons from this period and to indicate the proper road. The main ideas on which he insisted may be summed up as follows:

1. "We have not been taking refuge in our past. But we never gave our approval to the Ba'thist revolution being placed at the service of a regime or authority concerned only with proclaiming laws and giving directives. In this vast Arab homeland, young people wanted this revolution to produce a historic and humanitarian movement capable of satisfying the masses' deepest aspirations for values which open up new horizons and usher in a future permeated with a humanism as outstanding as those of other nations. In this way it will enable the people to free themselves from bondage, break their chains and recover the grandeur of Arab civilization."

2. "Our Party has placed a high value on knowledge, otherwise it would not have survived so long and avoided defeat. It has been successful because it has the far-seeing vision of the scientist; it likens knowledge to the moral values which remind Party militants of their mission on which depend the interests of tens of millions of people. Accomplishing of this mission calls for efforts

from us, a modesty and self-denial which could protect us from any new disaster and prevent us from making any blunders."

3. "If the Ramadan Revolution experiment is to be renewed, we must firmly undertake not to repeat the mistakes of the past. They were the result of letting ourselves be intoxicated by victory and power, by our off-handedness and our lack of resistance to temptations, by the break between the leadership and the rank-and-file, by diversions, by rivalry and internal power struggles. We abandoned our noble mission, whose accomplishment is the Party's raison-d'être and whose execution is the goal of our revolutions. We must work in the interests of the people and the tens of millions of Arabs."

4. "Like the revolutions it set off, the Party has been subject to hard knocks. We must remain vigilant, distinguishing authentic ideas from imported concepts... Militants must take an interest in their movement's past. In addition we must all go back to our nation's gloriuos past, using it as a permanent source of inspiration. A party which cannot reconcile its past and present is doomed to defeat, and will never make any headway. Similarly, a nation that breaks with its past will not be able to emerge from its wretchedness nor be reborn nor undertake revolutionary experiments."

5. "A party with a historic mission does not shrink from self-criticism and does not pass over its mistakes in silence. This attitude enables it to correct its trajectory. It is an essential condition for attaining its goals... The others are not wholly to be blamed; they are only partly responsible for our setbacks. We must accept responsibility for our mistakes and recognize our faults."

6. "Reaction and colonialism which are continually plotting against the people and the Arab revolution are not alone responsible for the latter's setbacks. The fault

also lies with the revolutionaries for having offered the foe a chance to exploit the revolution's mistakes."

7. "Only weak militants incapable of standing up to temptation are intoxicated by victories. They have no place in the revolution and the Party. Genuine militants become even more modest with every victory. They know that they can only make a contribution to victory and that victory itself belongs to the people."

8. "The Party is above the revolutions it sets off. It is always there to prevent, where necessary, the revolution from straying off course."

But the Arab revolution's enemies work together and conspire to prevent us from correcting our mistakes and to contain the movement favouring reforms. In this way they hamper the revolutionary Arab movement's progress so that it can find neither its authenticity nor its faith in the revolutionary Arab ideology. They do not want the people's consciousness raised. They are trying to strip the Ba'th, an Arab party, of its nationalist and unitive vocation. Their plotting will help factional interests to take power in order to undermine the work towards unity and shake confidence in unity, to pervert its socialist character and turn it into a pseudo-unitive party. The plotting will put the Party leadership in the hands of feudal and bourgeois families. It will force the Party to adopt a regional socialist posture, in other words, to recognize the fragmentation as a matter of fact. The military have got hold of the Party leadership with the intention of getting the Ba'th to reject the concepts of freedom and democracy, and are exercising in its name a form of dictatorial power likely to render the action of the masses ineffectual.

This is precisely what happened a year after Professor 'Aflaq gave his speech. February 1966 marks the onset of the second blight, since the 18 November 1963 disaster,

to afflict the Ba'th. This was the February 23 rebellion when the Party's principles came under attack from the army. The "ideological" guns were swung away from their main target—Israel, Zionism and their imperial and reactionary allies— and pointed at the Arab revolutionary movement and its ideology which constituted the two prime sources of unitive thought and the concept of liberation.

The VIIIth National Congress held in April 1965 failed either to thwart the plotters' designs or to sway them from their goal. As a matter of fact, this Congress turned into a forum where the conspirators' cause was pleaded and the means offered them to carry out their plan. The participants' level of awareness failed to reach its maximun either during or after the Congress, with neither the rank-and-file nor the leaders (even those in the highest offices) realizing that there was a crisis. The Arab revolutionary movement's ideological struggle has been continually tangling in painful situations and having to fight on several fronts. In addition, the Party's founder has had to shoulder the heavy burden all alone.

A report examining the reasons for the setback suffered by the Party in power in Iraq was submitted for discussion at the VIIIth National Congress. Recalling in its introduction how the Party was founded in Iraq and the various stages it had been through since, the report examined the Ba'th and the Iraq Communist Party which, having worked side by side, parted company after the July 14 Revolution. It claimed that each side was busy trying to bring about a break and ended up by turning into warring partners.

The introduction also raised the question of power-sharing after July 14, which ultimately resulted in the appearance of deviàtionist trends. It further broached the problem of the split between the Party and 'Abd-al-Nasser from the very start of the unity experiment..., in

other words, the dissension perpetuated since the Ramadan Revolution. The report then went on to list the negative points arising from the Ramadan experiment, giving the reasons why the regime fell and criticizing the various deviationist tendencies. The first point it took up was that of hammering out "a clear theory". Having suffered a setback and sacrificed the experiment, the leadership tried to pin responsibility for the reverse on Arab revolutionary ideology itself. It did everything it could to rush through projects conceived without any thought for what might become of them ultimately or for changing conditions. For these men, all that mattered was that the projects were sure to succeed, thereby helping them to seize power.

These leaders turned the revolution and power into private possessions. For them, revolution was synonymous with authoritarianism and violence. A revolution, designed to meet the aspirations of the people to see their great objectives attained, became a plaything in the hands of men lusting for power, men who debased it and made it vulnerable to the irresponsible finagling of individuals. Their motivations and outlook were contrary to the most elementary scientific rules. They were unscrupulous and did not have the faintest notion of culture or revolutionary planning. They exhibited contempt for the principles, practices, traditions and values of the struggle...

Nonetheless, they fell in with the reasoning of the Arab revolution's foes to criticize the revolutionary ideology and charge that it was confused. They considered that the lack of theoretical clarity was the main reason for the revolution's failure. The report did not fail to answer them on this particular point. Noting the predicament in which the comrades found themselves and the confusion between "consummate theory and theoretical clarity", it pointed out that theoretical clarity

did not necessarily mean that political action was based on a fully worked-out theory. It also called attention to the fact that the Party elaborated its ideology gradually after having lived through the struggle. It has given a clear definition of the society it intends to build, even though it has not provided very precise details. Even in times of crises, its conception of the struggle was right. It enabled the Party to act effectively, mobilize the masses, take the lead in the fight and out-match its rivals thanks to the initiatives it had taken. But to blame all of the movement's difficulties and the setbacks it has suffered on a lack of theoretical clarity only helps to give a superficial and incomplete picture of the situation. It smacks as much of bad faith as of ignorance. Even if the Party did have a perfect theory capable of providing it with a method which could put it in power, the mere existence of such a theory would not solve these problems at one go. The fact is, before it hit upon an adequate formula, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union made many attempts to work out various modes of government.

The lack of theoretical clarity noticed in the immediate post-revolutionary phase cannot be considered the main reason for the Party's setback and loss of power, inasmuch as its leaders, after the Ramadan Revolution, failed to apply the programme mapped out by the Party for that particular phase. They did not rally to the Party the social forces and classes which were interested in carrying out the programme. What is more, these leaders brandished muddled left-wing slogans and simultaneously capitulated shamelessly to the Right. They abandoned the ideological struggle, whose real importance they did not see. On the contrary, they treated it cavalierly and with contempt.

For this reason, the report submitted for discussion

to the VIIIth National Congress set out to probe the main causes of the disaster[152]:

1. "Despite repeated reminders by the national office concerning the need for preparing new studies examining Iraq's social and economic situation with a view to helping the government to work out a programme, the Party in Iraq failed to undertake such initiatives. For this reason, and in the absence of a scientific base, the authorities could only mark time, resort to makeshift expedients and become more and more involved in contradictions. Consequently, this failure may well be one of the causes of the disaster."

2. "The spirit of contradiction, spawned by a negative struggle, persisted through the new phase, which was characterized by a lack of militant education, by the absence of the regionalist leadership from all the organizational and orientation activities, the neglect of the work done by the Party's rank-and-file in safeguarding the revolution, a severance of ties between the leadership and the base and the abandonment of the military organization. It was also marked by quarrels where the stakes were accession to power and to key posts in the Party; by personal ambitions, individualist manifestations, countless factional and corporatist rallying calls under cover of right- and left-wing ideologies and the total absence of any goals or justification for such a variety of slogans."

4. "A deviationist line contrary to the principles of the popular struggle and the ultimate goals of militancy appeared in the Party right up to its highest levels. Weapons were employed to hamper the democratic process. (The Regional Congress held on 11 November,

152. *The origins of the disaster suffered by the Party in Iraq*, pp. 25-26.

1963 was in fact dubbed 'the Congress of machine-guns')."

5. "The Party was turned into a tightly closed organization, cut off from other forces. The action front was rejected and military discipline allowed to run down. The sacrosanct trades union leadership took arbitrary decisions, revealing a bourgeois authoritarianism."

6. "An Opposition, lacking substance and caught between the army and the national guard, could not turn the experiment to its advantage. It lacked the maturity necessary for success and for establishing reciprocal contact with the masses."

7. "The government committed blunder after blunder; corruption spread; the masses were totally disdained; there were no progressive achievements to encourage the people to join the Party. In fact, the government did nothing to show them that it was really acting in their interests."

8. "The Party's national office was incompetent and could not make up its mind."

The VIIIth Congress came to the conclusion that the causes listed above could not explain the whole of the disaster, because the large majority of them were only its consequences. However, it proposed to re-examine them in the light of the following[153]:

a) "The part played by colonialism and reactionary forces in setting off the terrible crisis in Iraq and the large number of intrigues aimed at preventing Syria and Iraq joining together and the Kurdish question being solved."

b) "The role of the oil monopolies and the misgivings they had about the socialist revolutionary line which was threatening their interests and ambitions."

153. Id: *Ibid;* p. 67-72.

c) "The impact of the Kurdish issue and the rift with 'Abd-al-Nasser."

d) "The risks of the deviationist political and ideological line that the Party in Iraq was following willi-nilly, and the determination of responsibilities."

In spite of all this, the appraisal of the situation erred largely on the side of insufficiency, as the IXth National Congress of February 1968 noted in a report on the subject. For, indeed, the work was not undertaken as part of an overall re-adjustment of the Party's course which might have enabled the real extent of the crisis to be appraised. By its failure to appreciate fully the general crisis that was buffeting it, the Party in a way gave the nod to the coup d'état of 23 February, 1966. What is more, as the Party's founder declared: "The coup d'état was the result of plots and the work of traitors; nevertheless it was also the consequence of the Party's weaknesses and the reformist trend, as well as the fundamental contradiction between the idea of the crisis touched off by these reforms and the real substance of the latter."

In this way, crisis followed crisis in conformity with the plans worked out by the external adversary who exploited the unitive movement's weaknesses to keep unity at bay. Arab revolutionary ideology was touched to the core. Every time we had an opportunity to undertake an action, however modest, in favour of unity, the colonial-Zionist-revolutionary alliance was there with measures designed to hamper and prevent it being carried out, so as to keep the nation divided and perpetuate colonialism.

The conspiracy hatched against the Arb revolution and liberation movement fighting for unity and socialism was aimed in the second half of the '60s at liquidating the Palestinian cause. The ties between the struggle for

unity and the struggle for liberation had to be broken. These conspiracies did indeed threaten the course, and even the very existence, of the Arab revolutionary movement, which is the voice of unitive opinion, and of all the bodies and trends drawing their inspiration from the Arab revolution. This stage also coincided with the start of activities by the fedayeen, who were admittedly still in early state of organization. What this meant was that the Arab revolution was backed up by the armed struggle which was underpinning the revolutionary ideology. The ideological fight thus became part and parcel of the armed struggle. But the conspiracy of 23 February, 1966 threw open the doors to colonialists, Zionists and reactionaries. It opened new perspectives for them, giving them the mean for carrying out their plan to deal the Arab revolutionary movement a blow, warp it and destroy it and counter its ideological call for unity, freedom and socialism. The conspiracy helped bar the great mission entrusted to Syria. Revolutionary activities were turned into childish pranks, and the Arab homeland's biggest historic revolutionary movement suffered a swingeing defeat, falling victim to its dissensions. Arab revolutionary forces had been scattered to the winds. The situation could only herald the defeat of June 5.

All this happened in the name of unity, freedom, socialism, revolution and the Left, in accordance with procedures worked out recently by neo-colonialism. Neutralization of the awareness of grass-roots militants in the Arab revolutionary movement was a common practice and was aimed at bringing off the plot. Contacts between the Party's founder and the base were deliberately cut. Every possible hurdle was raised to prevent the rank-and-file becoming aware of the speech the Party's founder had given. Everything he had done to analyze the crisis and condemn the plot in time was nullified by propaganda campaigns hostile to the Party's line. And

yet, all these intrigues had been denounced on a number of occasions[154].

Nationalist thought was undoubtedly endangered by the February 23 coup. The harmful effects flowing from it were pointed out at the IXth National Congress:

1. "The February 23 coup undermined the bases of nationalist and unitive thinking. The turncoats are the very men who, on the pretext of countering the mistakes of the unitive regime of 1958, betrayed unity and, after the break, joined the reactionaries in totally destroying any possibility of unity. They gave their backing to the regionalist regime and were particularly keen on Syria and 'Syrian Arabism' to the detriment of 'Egyptian Arabism'. They believed in the existence of several distinct sorts of Arab nationalisms, defined in terms of geographical limits according to the Syrian nationalists' theory."

2. The February 23 putschists tried to fight unity in the name of unity, destroy the party standing for unity and undermine the nationalist organization (which was the core of unity) in the latter's name. They took their revenge on the Party and the Ba'th for the 1958 unity. Their spokesman declared: "Unity is finished. That's enough for us. Let's prepare a regionalist type of revolution, modelled on that of 'Abd-al-Nasser. Let us use every possible means —the foulest treachery, terror and corruption— to win all the nationalist organizations over to our cause and use them as propaganda tools in the service of the regionalist power."

3. Moving away from the revolution's ideological line, they repudiated the connection between unity, freedom and socialism. Occasionally they pitted nation-

154. Cf. *The Starting Point,* 1st edition, pp. 215 and 223, and Professor Michel 'Aflaq's speech to the Regional Socialist Congress of 2 February 1964.

alism against the struggle for liberation, against socialism and humanitarian internationalism. They adopted a chauvinistic posture on the Kurdish question, refusing to recognize the national rights of other peoples[155].

They boxed socialism, in theory and in practice, in a regionalist-internationalist framework opposed to the nationalist conception and the socialist liberation struggle with which the Arab revolutionary ideology claimed kinship. Sometimes they separated the analysis of social classes from all of the ultimate elements of the Arab reality and the complex contradictions inherent in this reality. They slavishly followed the traditional Marxist model, without making any allowances for the real differences in the conditions and the situation. In addition, they constantly parrotted left-wing slogans.

4. They stripped the Palestinian cause of its scientific revolutionary substance and completely stopped being effective and responsible. They stooped to sensationalism and one-upmanship, falling into blind extremism and continually inciting people to war. The February 23 putschists did not stop at mouthing slogans. They even moved into action, rallying the people inside the country, setting up a common strategic front grouping together the Arab revolutionary forces, and preparing for war against the enemy just when the moment seemed right to carry out the liberation plan. Buth the defeat of June 5 exposed the real part played by the "left-wing princes" who set off a war of liberation in their own way, losing the Golan Heights and imprisoning and persecuting militants[156].

155. Cf. the work of the symposium organized in the Sudan in March 1970. The coments of the regionalists on the declaration of March 11 are highly revealing of their state of mind.

156. They repudiated socialist principles and the scientific analysis of the evolution of the times. They refused to recognize the Kurdish people's national rights. Besides they considered the March 11 declaration as a disavowed attempt to corrupt.

The IXth National Congress of February 1968 reviewed this period of crises which was triggered by the break-up of the 1958 merger and which coincided with the period of fragmentation in 1961. The same pattern was repeated following the break-up of the tripartite union and the collapse of the Ramadan Revolution in 1963, then by the coup d'état of 23 February, 1966 and the defeat of June 1967...

The Congress put this phase in an overall context so it could analyze the crisis which rocked the revolutionary movement and foil the plots against the revolution and its ideology.

According to the report submitted to the Congress and which attempted to trace the crisis back to its sources[157]:

"By calling for unity, freedom and socialism, the Ba'th launched an 'idea' which fitted in with the historic context in relation to contemporary Arab experience. The idea gained ground as a line expressing the thrust of 'Arab revolutionary ideology', and serving as a frame of reference for the activities of the Arabs and as a theoretical base. It helped save the Arab nation from fragmentation, bondage, exploitation and under-development..."

After a period of preparation which lasted seven years —1940 to 1947— the Ba'th was born. At the end of the first week of April 1947, the Arab and socialist Ba'th was founded.

It was the visible sign of a qualitatively new power, acquired after a long theoretical preparation in direct contact with a day-to-day militant experience. All the

157. "The Evolution of the Crisis in the Party", a report submitted to the IXth National Congress.

same, the Party necessarily suffered at its inception certain weaknesses which foreshadowed the crisis that was to rock the Arab revolutionary movement.

The report submitted to the IXth Congress listed the early causes which led to the present crisis:

1. The disagreements noted during the Ist National Congress concerning the conception of the Party.
2. The merger with the Arab Socialist Party in 1952, which was more a political gesture rather than the result of a theoretical shift or a unitive struggle.
3. The crisis which jolted the Party leadership and the lust for power.
4. The emergence of regionalist trends.
5. The appearance of a conservative political line and a defeatist outlook.
6. The belated establishment of a national command.
7. The existence of differing social classes within the Party, the infiltration of bourgeois elements into the Party and the petty bourgeois tendency which gained control of it.
8. The lack of an organizational theory and the gulf between theory and practice.
9. The absence of a strategy and the proliferation of private initiatives.
10. The excessive importance attached to Syria and the excessively heavy responsibility shouldered by the Party's founders.

Having pinpointed the remote causes of the situation, the Party's co-founder Professor Michel 'Aflaq, speaking for the Congress, analyzed the crisis set off in 1958:

"Weaknesses became apparent with the merger of Syria and Egypt in 1958. The Arab masses in the East became aware of the Party's ideas and watchwords, but the Party had not found the organizational resources

which would permit it consolidate its position among the people and assume leadership of the masses... So long as the Party fails to establish an organization worthy of its ideas, one which measures up to the demands of Arab unity, it will live under the threat of regionalist deviationism... If it is to make itself known and broaden the impact of its experiment, then its theory and organization must match the unified Arab struggle. Otherwise, it will remain a prisoner of its passion for power and will not survive the first test it has to face."

Professor 'Aflaq concentrated on making a critical analysis of the Party's national structure and its weaknesses. Stressing that nationalist structures were important as a living expression of Arab unity, he denounced the plots hatched against the Arab revolutionary movement. In his opinion, the plots were aimed at preventing Arab revolutionary thought from taking concrete shape; they were also intended to stop the development of an organizational structure rising above regional interests and leading to the advent of unity which would itself produce a revolutionary core. This core, he said, would be constantly up against regionalist tendencies which it would eliminate so as to build a unified Arab society.

Articles written by Professor 'Aflaq in 1966 are quoted in the relevant reports:

"The Ba'th's proposals fit in with the demands of the new phase, that of the Arabs, the phase of nationalism cutting across regional frontiers. Nonetheless, both in its organization and in its methods, the Ba'th has not been able to transcend the regional mould in which it came into being. As a result, it has not been able to meet the demands of the new phase."

The Party's founder added:

"By moving closer to the revolution of 'Abd-al-Nasser

in Egypt and bringing about the first experiment in Arab unity, the Party triggered an increasingly widespread campaign calling for the 'destruction of the Ba'th' and the 'liquidation of the Party'."

Knowing that the Ba'th's strong points were its unitive, scientific and revolutionary thought and its national organization, the conspirators concentrated their fire on these two aspects. As a result, every weakness was exploited so they could nullify all the positive things it had achieved.

The National Organization, according to Professor 'Aflaq

"The national organization represents a new revolutionary action that nobody dared to undertake before the Ba'th. The Party, still in its early years, had no past experience to go on, and was thus condemned later to bear the consequences of the relative weaknesses of its beginnings."

Nevertheless, one may wonder whether the Party's national organization was up to the task of putting an end to the dissension in the Ba'th, of preventing these quarrels from affecting its outlook and changing its policies, and of eliminating them for good.

"The mistakes committed in the course of this experiment", said Professor 'Aflaq, "do not discharge the Party of responsibility. It failed in its task; it omitted to raise the organization to the level of the theory. It felt the need for setting up a national comand only when the pursuit of a regionalist course proved to be dangerous".

"The national command merely coordinated activities and facilitated cooperation among the various re-

gions, while the regionalist leaders retained their independence and freedom of action. The national organization was, consequently, only a simple expression of a generally widespread vision. It did not acquire a really centralizing character. All the warnings given to regionalist leaders and all the attempts to prevent them from slipping out of the Party's control and make them follow its line of action, sometimes gave rise to mutinous campaigns... The national command lost all authority, and was unable to provide the backing expected by the national organizations which pinned all their hopes on it."

Addressing a meeting of the National Council in Baghdad in May 1966, Professor 'Aflaq emphasized this point and recalled the regionalist leaders' attempts to escape from the control of the national command and undermine its authority. He said that on February 23 the rebel regionalist leaders took the step of throwing their tanks and guns against the national comand, thereby carrying out a secret plan which was intended to swing the Party and the Arab revolution completely away from the real revolution and Arab unity, though the latter was the only yardstick for measuring this stage's revolutionary dimension.

"Let us examine this", said Professor 'Aflaq, trying to find out what was behind it all. "Let us examine the attacks made against the Party's national leadership. They betrayed lingering traces of the divisiveness of our society, spawned by colonialism, Zionism and all the foes of the Arab nation who fear Arab unity more than anything else. They fear the Party standing for Arab unity, the Party which in the course of this phase worked out a correct theory which would permit achieving this unity. Who is going to represent this unity and who will symbolize this theory in the Party? It is the national

leadership in its capacity as an institution and not as persons... The national leadership represents the Party's revolutionary spirit. If we do not succeed in forging it, all our efforts will be sure to fail".

These articles and speeches attempted to provide a broad analysis of the stage before the June defeat. It was intended to enable the IXth National Congress to formulate a strategy from which would evolve a new revolutionary theory suited to the requirements of the phase following the June defeat. The new theory underlined the unitive theory, stressing the need for ridding Arab revolutionary thought of its weaknesses and for improving revolutionary action in the light of specific unitive and revolutionary criteria. It also emphasized the necessity for denouncing the dangers of deviationism and for showing the Arabs how they could get over the defeat and avoid a further crisis.

Revolutionary Arab ideology acquired greater clarity as a result of all this. It was further able to define and develop both nationalist thought and the unitive theory, particularly since nationalist thought had tried to solve the Kurdish problem satisfactorily. Furthermore, it became aware of the need to establish links henceforth with the other nationalisms born inside the Arab homeland and on the basis of a common and unified struggle. Simultaneously it enabled the objectives of the next stage after the June defeat to be defined.

The report of the IXth National Congress, which laid down the strategy for the stage concerned, examined the state of mind of the revolutionary movement before the June defeat which prevented the masses from playing their role. This state of mind, which favoured regionalist tendencies and in particular turned against unity, belonged to a period trascended by the Arab struggle. The

report also attempted to evaluate the role of the Arab revolutionary movement during the previous phase[158]:

"The party succeeded in spreading the theory of unity. It managed to apply the scientific formula in its national organization thereby enabling unity to be given substance and shape. But it did not know how to forge the instrument which could give it the means for bringing about unity effectively. Its weak centralism, the inadequate growth of its ideology, the largely impulsive behaviour of its militants and the lack of a clearly drawn -up strategy— all prevented it from carrying out its responsibilities. Signs of weakness began to appear right from the start of the unitive experiment. Furthermore, the crisis was only worsened by what was happening in the government. As for the February 23 conspiracy and the June 5 disaster, they served as an ultimatum to it as to any other party."

In fact, this period in the development of Arab revolutionary ideology, following the June 5 defeat, coincided with a time of reappraisal when it was subject to the most painful self-criticism (a process continuing to this day). This self-criticism helped the movement to correct its course, expand and take stock of the full extent of the crisis which had shaken both it and the Arab revolution. For this reason, the IXth National Congress, hewing to its strategy, did not stop at self-criticism, but went on to criticize the various instruments of the movement.

"In short", it noted "our middling level revolutionary development cannot shelter the revolution from disasters".

So, as the report points out, it is the Party, once more understanding the reason for its existence (which

158. The report on the strategy of the stage, p. 6.

implies accomplishing the Arab revolution), which will find the means for rebuilding itself on a healthy foundation. But how?

The answer to that is given in the report, which also lays down the conditions for such a renewal.

1. "The Party has not taken into full consideration the theory it has itself formulated. It did not analyze it methodically and did not help its development. This is the most serious, most dangerous and most notable of the negative aspects of the past period. A critical and wide-ranging study of the course of its own history will quite naturally enable the Party to realize its errors and recover its buoyancy and all of its raison d'être; in short, to renew contact with its ideal, its revolutionary spirit and its own moral values."

2. "The Party's class structure must be changed by basing its action on working class and peasant sectors so as to create its main revolutionary base there and by undertaking the education of its militants."

3. "The national command must take effective control of the Party leadership, and stop playing at being a mere symbolic and moral authority."

4. "We must reject the Stalinist conception of revolutionary action which makes a distinction between the party in power and other parties. This distorts the nationalist and democratic substance of the Party and encourages regionalism, authoritarianism and bureaucracy."

5. "We must abandon traditional methods in our struggle, but we have to resort to the people's armed struggle to achieve the aims of the Arab revolution."

6. "We must create the objective conditions for shielding the revolution from all disasters. Our duty is, therefore, to form a popular national front at both

regional and national levels with the primary aim of engaging in an armed struggle."

7. "We are called on to join our efforts to coordinate our fight and liberate, mobilize and arm the masses."

8. "We must take the Palestinian struggle as the starting point, not only for the liberation of Palestine, but for achieving all of the objectives of the Arab revolution."

In all the articles he wrote after the June defeat, Professor 'Aflaq insisted on the conditions necessary for bringing about this sweeping internal revolution which will help the movement to renew itself and provide it with the resources for coping with the problems the Arab nation is going through and which will determine its future. He concentrated on the nationalist cause and the problem of unity, both as a theory and as a strategy, thereby helping to develop further the unitive nationalist concept (which the revolutionary ideology claims as its own) in the light of the new situation the revolution found itself in as a result of the June defeat. The basic ideas in his writings on the nationalist question may be summarized as follows[159]:

1. "The first reaction to the June defeat is to learn the appropriate lessons from past mistakes. In other words, we must put aside regionalist and authoritarian attitudes and once again obey the logic of popular nationalist action. We have, therefore, to go back to the pristine sources of the Arab revolution, raise the revolutionary consciousness to a higher level and look for adequate ways and means for coping with the present dangers... Our victory depends on our ability to make the disaster a starting point for the achievement of unity."

159. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Starting Point*, 1st edition, pp. 53-54.

2. "The disaster forces us to revise and consolidate the revolution's theoretical bases and test their strength again. This is a job for the Party's leaders. They must concentrate on analyzing the situation, spotting the weak points and the shortcomings and criticizing the present theoretical bases. But they must not confine themselves to an examination of the Arab reality only. They are also expected to compare it with what is happening in the world and define an effective revolutionary course"[160].

3. "The stoic revolutionary attitude meeting the demands of effective revolutionary action, which alone is capable of coping with the Arab nation's difficulties which are shackling its freedom, unity and its fight against under-development, is a measure of the intellectual upheaval demanded... But this idea is clearly close to the theory of Arab unity, which permits the Ba'thists to arrive at a deeply revolutionary conception, to have an overall view of the nation and take note of the under-development afflicting it. Where the unitive theory is missing or weak, regionalism rides high; here our revolutionary resolve would also lose its ardour, entailing consequences at the theoretical level of revolutionary action"[161].

4. "The disaster reminded us all, as it did the Arab nation which is in the throes of revolution, that great patience is needed and that long years of suffering and privations must be expected. In the event, running the revolution is a painful task which can only be ensured by those who can put up with so trying a life. Their success at the job depends of the way they see their historic action, as one straddling both the past and the future, one which endows them not only with a clear and overall

160. Id: *Ibid;* p. 74.
161. Id: *Ibid;* p. 84.

vision, but a magnanimity of the heart, a high spiritual level and noble moral values. They will thus be able to rise above pettiness and pay no attention to futile questions and secondary issues"[162].

5. "The Palestinian problem does not call for a special solution. It represents the final victory of the Arab cause, the completion of the Arab nation, once it has got rid of its colonialist, Zionist and reactionary poisons. The Palestinian trouble calls for the same remedies as Arab society. It requires that the vast majority of our Arab people throughout the great Arab homeland be emancipated, that they be freed from exploitation and that the struggle be unified... Only the entire Arab nation cand stand up to the injustice and exploitation of this century"[163].

6. "Colonialism and Zionism are attacking the Arab nation to prevent its revolution from going forward and its unity from being forged. How is one to face up to this great danger? We have neither the fearful weapons nor the inventions available to colonialism. But our faith has been acquired through a sturdy realization of injustice and of our legitimate rights. We have the advantage of numbers, we have a huge homeland and vast resources, and we are ready to make any sacrifice. We have qualities that the affluent countries and those who live off poor nations have not heard of... By taking up arms in a popular struggle, the Arab people constitute the only effective force capable of hurling back and containing the enemies and freeing our conquered territories."

7. "The period our nation is going through is one of extreme gravity. The Party whose task is to be the Arab nation's spiritual and moral guide, mentor and right

162. Id: *Ibid;* p. 56.
163. Id: *Ibid;* p. 61.

hand, must look deeply into all the aspects of the stage through which it is going, in the light of its own past experience and revolutionary experiences in general, from which it will not fail to learn something usefull...

"In the period following on the June defeat, the Party must necessarily give proof of its revolutionary authenticity and its genuine nationalism. Nothing but unity in its revolutionary sense will get us out of the disaster, or make us forget the defeat, or hold Zionism and Israel at bay, or overcome the colonialism hiding behind Israel. More than ever before, the Party's moves should be aimed at achieving unity. It must therefore draw its inspiration from nationalist reasoning. Its action must be adapted to the nationalist context, for it permits the Party to study its internal problems and its policies in line with unitive reasoning, which is the logic of the united Arab nation. We must reject the arguments of factions which colonialism and Zionism are trying to foist on us. The last two hope to bar the road to Arab unity once and for all in a few decades at most. Israel's existence and expansion depend on it. In this way the monopolies will be able to carry on their business of exploitation. Israel's survival and the pursuit of colonialist exploitation will keep our people in a state of under-development and weakness to prevent them from trying to break out of it... That is what divisiveness reserves for us"[164].

8. "The strength of the people necessarily lies in their mass awareness. They must become aware of the Arab revolution. It is our job to sensitize the whole of the population constantly, without neglecting the organization and practical experience. Success will crown this effort and enable everyone of our people to take up arms and accomplish our Party's and our nation's

164. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 91-99.

mission, thanks to the armed revolution on which now depends the destiny of the Party and the nation"[165].

9. "The Kurds' patriotic movement should not run counter to the Arab revolution. If that happened, then it would be the work of colonialism, accomplished either by drawing away the leaders of this movement or by getting reactionary and breakaway Arab governments to compromise themselves. After having helped the movement to gain importance, colonialism will turn against it at the appropriate moment. Nationalism is a feature of the present day. Colonialism's role is quite simply to exploit this nationalism and rally it to its cause. We can thus see the difference between colonialist exploitation of the question of national minorities and the socialist solution which has succeeded in averting nationalistic confrontations within a single country. Socialism has solved the question in such a way as to emphasize the common destiny binding the various nationalisms. The Socialist state is responsible for protecting them and doing away with class exploitation and authoritarianism. There is no question but that the Kurdish patriotic movement must join the Arab revolution and fight against colonialism, Zionism, class exploitation, underdevelopment and divisive tendencies. Anything that prompts the Kurdish patriotic movement to come to terms with imperialism and Zionism or to fall in with feudal and separatist interests must be condemned as being part and parcel of the conspiracy directed against the Arab revolution and the Kurdish patriotic movement. In addition, satisfaction of this movement's demands must fit in with the Arab revolutionary posture"[166].

165. Id: *Ibid;* p. 103.
166. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 106-108.

10. "Arab unity is not going to drop from the skies. It requires that we have our feet firmly on the ground and that we remain in contact with reality and its problems. The road to Arab unity will be impassable if divisive tendencies and regionalism succeeded in distracting our attention and lodging themselves in our minds, and if we lose our overall vision and control of the whole of day-to-day activity and secondary details. The Party is trying to move closer towards a form of live action which would help it transform its thought into practical reality. One must not get locked into the present situation and remain a prisoner of divisive and regionalist thinking; nor must one get lost in illusions and dreams, because unity is a wish, a distant goal. By tipping too heavily in favour of one of these two extremes at the expense of the other, we would be straying away from the proper revolutionary path"[167].

11. "Despite the revolutions that have taken place in the past two decades, despite the emergence of progressive movements in a good many Arab regions, despite real changes in social relationships and production as in the means of production, and despite the efforts of the nation, the Arabs have remained incapable of facing up to the enemy outside and withstanding his attacks. This is the reason for the defeat of nationalism which has sorely tried the Arab countries. Divisiveness has, in fact, been the main hurdle. The revolutions and advances that have been made did not succeed in getting at the roots of this divisiveness and halting its spread by destroying them. We have thus jeopardized the very existence of the nation, for our feeble rate of growth has not been able to halt the advance of those who wish us ill. And then again, time is not on our side, for we have not attained a degree of equilibrium which would allow us to improve

167. Id: *Ibid;* p. 111.

our methods and restimulate the revolutionary venture carried out over the past 20 years. Unity offers us the tools with which to wipe out all our weaknesses whatever they are, put an end to our persisting under-development and, in time, our indecision... If we are to carry the battle awaiting us, the full potential of our nation must be mobilized, because our foes are many and powerful, and they also have modern science at their disposal... Arab unity, the unity of our nation is indeed threatened today. The frontiers of every Arab region are also the frontiers of the Arab nation, of the Arab homeland. The deliverance of each Arab region depends on the contribution it makes to the victory of the supreme national cause"[168].

12. "The new step is a new revolution. It is a new foundation of the Party, a total and radical renewal of its concepts, thought, struggle and the perspectives of its fight. In the course of the coming period, Party militants and all Arab activists will be expected to work out a new form of action different from the old, and show proof of their maturity and farsightedness. In this way, we will be able to make good use of our nation's potential and our people's latent possibilities and score more successes than we did in the past 20 years"[169].

13. "For years we have been witnessing the emergence of so-called revolutionary types of governments. These regimes were afflicted by two diseases — regionalism and an utter contempt for the people. They stopped halfway short of revolution and set themselves up as obstacles to progress towards the revolution and its development. While indulging in the language of Arab unity and nationalism, they secretly worked to promote

168. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 114-118.
169. Id: *Ibid;* p. 119.

the interests of specific regions. They were incapable of projecting the image of the Arabs who have been fighting in the course of this century against colonialist and Zionist injustice, both as a nation already suffering from under-development and divisive tendencies and as one legitimately trying to achieve unity and progress in the hope of eliminating injustice and resisting the ambitions of the Zionist-colonialist alliance to block its historic journey. They could not even express the revolution's humanitarian and socialist character in the fight to free the Arab masses of their chains so they could develop their revolutionary potential. This ought to encourage us to take the revolution to the very end and not to stop at half-measures and opt for easy ways out. We must bring about total revolution and find radical solutions. We are in duty bound to pursue our journey right up to the end and with determination"[170].

14. "Only the proletarian masses are in a position to construct Arab unity... It can only be achieved if it is conceived as a shock unit. The vast majority of the people will have to be in arms for unity to be defended. Our struggle for liberation must become unified. Let us join together to free our territories conquered by force. Colonialism and Zionism will prevent us from uniting, but only for a short time"[171].

"These were the broad principles of Arab revolutionary ideology at the end of the '60s. Revolutionary thought appears to have been especially concerned with scanning the events which succeeded one another in the '60s for signs of the Arab nation's struggle and course of action. The major concern of revolutionary ideology was to seize on the fundamental connection between various

170. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 128-129.
171. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 135-136.

phenomena, denounce the causes of the new setback and show the way out of the crisis.

"Revolutionary Arab ideology has retained its own scientific and revolutionary character. It abides by its principles and reconciles theory and practice. It has kept its method of applying an overall dialectical analysis to the Arab movement in all its complex nationalist, liberation and class struggles. It has not been content with providing a scientific description of the situation of undertaking academic studies cut off from the context and the historic development. And it has rejected all abstract visions and judgments, as well as impulsive reactions and hotheaded, unrealistic revolutionary sloganeering.

"Consequently, the revolution's application and strategy were in conformity with the theoretical analysis. Meeting the imperialis-Zionist challenge requires a solid unity able to stand up to the test and an examination of subjective conditions to find out where the nationalist structure is wanting. In addition, criticism must go hand in hand with self-criticism... This was the starting point of the Arab revolutionary ideology which at the time stressed the importance of the broad theoretical principles which surrounded it at its inception. We think that the indecision of our militants and the crises we went through from the start of this phase were the result of, among other things, the campaigns to misinterpret our venture."

We also used every effort to enable the revolutionary ideology to intensify its analysis, to lay bare the coincidence between the appearance of divisive tendencies and the presence of Zionists and colonialists, and to condemn all incomplete revolutions which are incapable of putting a stop to the nation's fragmentation. The ideology must also indicate precisely the revolutionary level attained by

the Arab struggle between the 1948 disaster and the 1967 defeat. The conclusion reached in this analysis may be summed up in three points:

1. The imperialis-Zionist and reactionary challenge can only be met by struggle;

2. No unity without freedom, no unity without a liberation struggle which would enable the nation to overcome those opposing its unity and freedom—Zionism, colonialism and reaction;

3. The proletarian masses are the true builders of unity.

Such are the theoretical and strategic solutions proposed by Arab revolutionary ideology for the frustrations of the Arabs following their defeat in June 1967. According to this ideology, this is the answer to the needs we feel and which are prompting us to reappraise all the postulates of the struggle. What we are calling for here is a new revolution, a revolution within the Arab revolution itself, for uniting and arming the disadvantaged classes.

This is the conclusion that revolutionary ideology has drawn from the actual Arab experience and which is prompting it to move on to a practical application of its premises. This is how we will prevent the revolution's internal and external enemies from blocking the nation's revolutionary progress or deflecting it from its objectives. When that has been achieved, we shall be able to free revolutionary thought and lead it out of the fog which is hindering it from realizing the full extent of the crisis, and also hiding from it the only way out of the crisis and its mistakes.

Part Five

Chapter XV

The Seventies

All through the '70s Arab revolutionary ideology pursued the same course and continued its development, while emphasizing its deep attachment to the experience of the struggle undertaken by the revolutionary movement. It refused to shut itself up in outdated speculations or drift into ineffectual abstraction and intellectualism. It had to transcend its purely experimental framework and avoid the mistake of operating solely on the basis of previous initiatives and setbacks. This was necessary to broaden its knowledge and determine a scientific unitive concept. However, it never lost sight of the need to maintain close links between theory and its effective application in the struggle. This is the way it will uncover any deviation from the unitive line, and be able to condemn and combat distortions and consolidate the basic principles of the new scientific, revolutionary and proletarian concept that Arab unity and nationalism evoke. In addition, it could define the form that the nationalist struggle against divisive tendencies should take. On this basis, the revolutionary ideology must particularly take into consideration the fact that the struggle for unity is indivisible from the struggle for liberation. And it must also realize that the masses are attached to this unity.

The major concern of nationalist thought and revolutionary ideology is to follow the course of events and remain in direct contact with the struggle. They will accordingly avoid getting lost in abstract intellectual speculation on the meaning of unity. Care must be taken especially not become mired in answering questions that still cast doubts on the theory of unity. Furthermore, we must not confine ourselves either to an empiricism bereft of revolutionary substance or to purely objective assumptions and postulates provided by actual experience.

The chief aim of the new nationalist thinking of the Left is to fully clarify the previous experience, analyze and criticize it, pick out the weak points of the unitive posture and the three principal kinds of deviationism:

1. The regionalist tendency, which is a continuation of the state of mind that sprang from the June 5 defeat;
2. The defeatist trend, which makes a distinction between the struggle for unity and the struggle for liberation;
3. Advocacy of apparent unity. Those who do this are trying to swing the struggle for unity in line with policies based on power politics and debase it. Their objective is to consolidate the existing regimes, resist the revolutionary trend and divert the masses from their struggle.

Professor 'Aflaq's speeches on the armed struggle, the peaceful solution and the conspiracy of 17 September 1970; all the articles wich have appeared in his book "Le Point de départ"; the Arab Liberation Front's statement; the report of the Xth National Congress; and the work done by the National Cultural Office and the moral backing it has provided the movement with its internal bulletin, the Arab Revolution — all these are complementary initiatives aimed at further developing the sum and substance of the theory of unity and liberation,

which mirrors the aspirations of the working masses. In other respects, the object of all these initiatives was to determine the strategy which unitive action should employ in the course of this stage.

Professor 'Aflaq answered two basic questions in the speech he gave on 16 January 1970[172]:

1. What is the goal of the armed struggle that the Arab revolutionary movement should wage?
2. Why is it that the Party of the Arab revolution has not realized the importance of the armed struggle?

The answers to these two questions help us understand the revolutionary ideology's attitude to the Arab revolution and revolutionary thought itself. The two main driving forces of Arab revolutionary thought in the early '70s were criticism, which enabled deviationism and distortions to be condemned, and self-criticism, which was useful for correcting mistakes and forging ahead. This thought, which has rejected considerations of partial and relative impact dictated by the defeatist faction's actual postures, is against any attempt to break in the Arabs and weaken their determination. It has condemned tactical deviationist attitudes opposed to the strategy of the struggle for liberation and attacked the abdication on the revolutionary ideology's basic principles... This thought has remained attached to genuine scientific revolutionary principles. It has helped us cope stoically with extremely painful events, so that we may move out of the present phase, straighten out all deviationist trends and prepare for the next theoretical and practical stage.

Here is how Professor 'Aflaq answered the first question:

172. Michel 'Aflaq: *The Starting Point*, 1st edition, p. 139.

"By plunging into the battle, the Party provides itself with the remedies for healing all the ailments afflicting it and not just one particular infirmity. In this way it will be able to renew itself completely and see its theory, practical action and struggle forged anew on sound bases."

The reply flowed naturally from a decisive realization of the reasons which have made the Party of the Arab revolution neglect the armed struggle.

"Consequently, the logical conclusion one can draw from this", he said, "is that the party has not committed a single mistake by neglecting this one particular aspect —the armed struggle— but that for some time it has fallen short all down the line. Because of this, it has not realized the necessity of the armed struggle, nor the importance of the Palestinian struggle within the Arab revolution. As against this, it spent its time on minor issues compared with what is at stake in the struggle.

"The armed struggle is the only thing that will cure the Arab revolutionary movement in particular and the Arab revolution in general of all of its ailments. It is here that Arab revolutionary thought and the new Left have found common ground for understanding each other. Both have realized the need to transcend traditional forms of struggle and work out a new conception of relationships between the revolutionary avant-garde and the masses."

"Our duty is to topple the artificial barriers hampering the Party's action", said Professor 'Aflaq, "denounce the distortions and prod the nation out of its inaction. We must undertake an extraordinary revolutionary action so that this persisting immobility may vanish like dew in the sun... We must prepare the ground for a new rebirth and a profound change. Otherwise we shall

betray ourselves, hoodwink ourselves and lead the people into error."

The revolutionary ideology holds that the armed struggle is not a simple form of struggle like any other, imposed on the revolutionary movement as an objective necessity. It does not merely transcend the traditional old forms, but aims much higher still. As Michel 'Aflaq says:

"It opens the door to a complete and thoroughgoing transformation of the Party... The Party lost its authentic outlook years ago. It stopped growing... It is only in the heat of the action and the people's armed struggle that we shall be able to reorganize the Party and meet its needs. The form of action the Party is following in all the regions is no longer appropriate today. It is not longer effective and is bound to fail."

We notice then that from the very early '70s the revolutionary ideology gave itself the task of searching continually for a new and adequate type of action and of coordinating all the initiatives with the object of setting off an internal revolution. In addition, the movement was forced to make a decisive, even historic, choice: whether it should become a force belonging to the past, in which case it was bound to wither away during the course of the present phase, or wheter it should conserve its historic vocation, in which case it has to surpass itself, straighten itself out, renew itself, grow up and correct its mistakes. The present phase should usher in a prosperous and promising era in every area.

This ideology holds that the battle of liberation to which we are calling the people is a "historic responsibility". It permits the impact of all revolutionary and unitive initiatives to be measured, and constitutes a preliminary condition for any new effective renewal.

It was in this perspective that Professor 'Aflaq evaluated the results of the interaction, which has lasted over 30 years, between the idea of unity and the Arab revolutionary movement responsible for putting it into practice. In addition, the dialectical connection between ends and means contributed to shifting a part of the struggle against the splintering in the Party itself. So any future renewal will only be in theory and in practice, an organic part of the unitive struggle. Speaking at the Xth National Congress, Professor 'Aflaq had this to say[173]:

"Our Party and our society are still carrying traces of the past. The Party's task is to rid itself and Arab society of these holdovers. Divisiveness is the greatest scourge of our Arab homeland and the hardest to eliminate. Our party is showing genuine revolutionary mettle by undertaking a venture fraught with dangers—setting up a single nationalist organization. It has had fair success in unifying the struggle. But the objective it hopes to reach is still far away. Real unity is not round the corner. The object is to harmonize not just our organization, but our thinking and our feelings as well. We must reconcile our opinions and habits in order to unify Arab society, by bringing about its cohesiveness and harmony, and inject a spirit of fraternity into it."

The whole problem comes down to restoring the links between unity and the movement responsible for bringing it about. Our success in shunning verbiage for good will determine largely the outcome of this operation which ought to permit the movement to put an end to divisions. We must get the Party out of the conference rooms and among the people, explaining to them its principles, ideas, organization, studies, projects, its faith and driving force and what it has achieved. The Party

173. Id: *Ibid;* pp. 145-153.

must break out of the confining limits of meeting rooms where a few leaders get together for discussions. It must compel recognition for itself throughout the length and breadth of the vast Arab territory and reach out to the working classes. We must sow the good seed and watch over it every day.

The second objective condition forces us to renew contacts with the masses:

"Secondly, the Party needs to extend its action to the proletarian masses and work in close collaboration with them. It must rouse the people's awareness, encourage them to take part in its activities and become interested in its problems. It is expected to mobilize the masses and prepare them for the battle that is certainly imminent."

In his July 1970 speech, Professor 'Aflaq put us on our guard against the plot to prevent the Arab revolutionary movement's renewal and thereby cause its disappearance[174]:

"In order to prevent the Party from meeting the Arab nation's historic needs in this century, its enemies as well as the holders of foreign capital and Arab reactionary circles have hatched a plot to undermine the Ba'th's bases. The plot has acquired a further dimension with the addition of new elements... This general statement is enough to explain the campaigns of denigration which have been waged against the Party."

For this reason, no renewal is possible without a struggle against the attempts to distort the Party's work and those responsible for organizing them. It is only by condemning the current deviationism, by opposing it doggedly and eliminating it, and by working out care-

174. Id: *Ibid;* p. 156.

fully prepared new forms of revolutionary action that we shall build our future.

The revolutionary movement will not be able to put an end to a period marked by inertia, indecision and incompetence, except by surmounting the present crisis. By refusing to back down before the foe outside, says Professor 'Aflaq, and by rejecting all peaceful solutions, we have covered "one of the steps of the Arab revolution which is only beginning, and we shall have done with blunders and indecision". "In this way", he says, "we shall be able to go through a whole stage of our history and get closer to the outlook and the theory which were features of this period. We trust only the persons, regimes and governments showing their attachment to this view and theory. So the examination of this phase must not be made with the object of turning a blind eye to what went wrong, if victories at the Party level and in the political arena are to be assured in the next period. The analysis must show us the way to the future... What we have to do is get rid of regionalism and cosmetic reformism, which are in reality two closely related tendencies".

These two tendencies worked their way into the revolutionary movement with the complicity of the regionalist regime. As it comes from the government, the threat posed by regionalism concerns not only the Party, but the entire nation. Seen in this light, the struggle against distortion within the revolutionary movement itself ties in with the people's struggle for unity. Contact with the masses and the removal of the obstacles raised by the authorities to isolate the movement from the people should encourage us to engage in an ideological struggle such as Professor Michel 'Aflaq has described.

One of the commonest practices of the champions of regionalism and reformism was to turn the masses away from the principal struggle by giving priority to questions

of internal reconstruction, thereby misleading them and making a mockery of reality. Besides, their deeds belied their words. They assumed that the interests of regional power were synonymous with the interests of the nation. And they also hampered the initiatives of all those who attempted to defy them or unmask the real face of regionalist power...

In connection with the plot behind the peaceful solution, Michel 'Aflaq believes that by drawing the people's attention away to problems of "reconstruction" and "development" in line with regionalist plans, the authorities passed over in silence two factors of the highest importance: "the dangerous collusion between colonialism and Zionism, on the one hand, and the unification of the Arab struggle to ward off these dangers, on the other".

"If the reconstruction and development projects", he continued, "are not aimed right from the start at preparing the masses to face up to the colonialist, Zionist and reactionary dangers threatening the existence of the Arabs; if they are not used as a means for combating and overcoming these dangers and for organizing the Arab people's unified struggle... then they will be considered as attempts to divert the people's energy and mislead them. For the fact is that colonialism operating through the Zionist state, and Israel itself, is capable of demolishing everything that has been achieved in 20 years."

In the same speech, Professor 'Aflaq drew attention to another clink in the regionalist power's argument and a further aspect of its deviationism, which led to its attempts to hush up the truth with the help of misleading campaigns.

"Any nation can lose a war or a battle", he said. "But a nation will be able to live down such a defeat

sooner or later if it respects human values, and shows it is aware of the reasons for the defeat and that it can draw the appropriate lessons from it. But a definitive defeat, one that keeps recurring and perpetuating itself—this is what they are trying to pass off as a victory. An illusion whose acceptance by the public is facilitated by the fact that the fight is not going to be any less hypothetical for all that. The Arab people must accordingly resist these attempts and put a final stop to them. Victory demands a long and pitiless effort on the part of every one of us, but let us be frank and drop our reservations. Any bid to throw dust in the people's eyes, make a mockery of the truth and call things by their opposite names is bound to fail."

Professor 'Aflaq holds that the attempts to distort the truth, stage a diversion and make us capitulate and go along with peaceful solutions are all part of a conspiracy mounted against the Arab people. The regional authorities act as agents carrying out orders.

He wound up his speech in these terms:

"Although there are some among those who have knuckled down to regionalism and reformism who would like to bury the nation's future and dismiss its militant potential as the product of a conspiracy hatched by some and of the shortsightedness of others, the people must carry on fighting. They must unite, assure the Arabs' future and remain in full control of their unlimited possibilities. They will in this way be able to wage a continuing struggle for many years to come all over the Arab territory from the Gulf to the ocean."

Addressing the Ba'thists as secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th, Michel 'Aflaq urged them to rejoin the ranks of the Palestinian revolution, after the first disaster it suffered in Jordan in September 1970. Then

he went on to assess the implications of the plot hatched against the Arab people[175]:

"The historic dimension and consequences of the struggle waged by the Palestinian resistance as an extension of the Arab liberation movement transcend the framework of the June war. On June 5, 1967, the defeat was inflicted on Arab bodies which tended to be regionalist, shallow and backward-looking. But in the present fight, colonialism is planning to frustrate the Arab masses and the armed revolutionary avant-garde, that is, those whose mission is to liberate Palestine and wrench the Arabs' destiny from the hands of Zionism and colonialism."

In an article headed "The Great Conspiracy", dated 25 September 1970, Professor 'Aflaq even criticized the links between the regionalist organizations which no longer measured up to revolutionary standars, and the colonialists' designs. In his view commitment to Arab unity was the basic yardstick by which the revolutionary character of these organizations could be judged.

"Non-respect of the two fundamental conditions without which the Arab revolution would be meaningless —working-class participation and commitment to Arab unity— has meant progressive Arab organization have lost their revolutionary vocation and their effectiveness. They have ended by appealing to the classes to collaborate with regionalism and tacitly coming to terms with colonialism, Zionism and the foes of the Arab revolution. Infiltration, in one way or another, of the leadership of these organizations by such elements thus became inevitable. Nobody could prevent

175. Id: *Ibid;* p. 176.

them seizing control of it, setting its course and the limits that could not be overstepped."

As a result, according to Michel 'Aflaq, only the masses can guarantee to hold the revolution on course during the present period. And he added, in an article dated 23 October 1970[176]:

"The masses are our last resort. More than ever today, they are the builders of the revolution, the only ones who can write history. The events shaping our destiny have revealed defects and shortcomings which affect the revolutionary organizations and movements. They have revealed that there is a break between the leadership and the rank-and-file, and between the rank-and-file and the public at large... As from today, the revolutionary movement has no right to accept this situation and must open up towards the masses. It must get people interested, not only in the obvious issues, but also give them access to internal issues and secrets... So long as there is no such opening, no organic link with the masses and no participation by the people, then proclamations of faith in the masses will remain questionable and hypocritical. Faith in the masses implies that you consider them the only powerful force basically capable of taking on the colonialist and Zionist powers and all those opposed to the Arab nation's development."

Professor 'Aflaq concluded his article by providing the only answer to a major question posed by the reality of the Arab revolution: What to do? The answer to that lies in the cultural revolution which gives us an opportunity to question traditional and backward methods and build a revolutionary structure meeting the new objective conditions. The decisive experience our nation is just

176. Id: *Ibid;* p. 181.

going through has swept aside, once the mistakes and shortcomings were discovered, a whole lot of illusions, such as, among others, the purely formal legitimization of the masses' role. This is openly and shamelessly in contradiction with the will and the interests of the masses. It is opposed to the masses revolutionary consciousness, which has been acquired at the expense of so much blood and sweat... The genuine revolutionary movement is quite capable of understanding this truth and taking the real road to deliverance, which is the democratic road. It requires the cooperation of the masses, a frank give-and-take with the people.

In the article headlined "The Call of Historic Responsibility", dated 16 March 1971, Professor 'Aflaq's strictures and self-criticism went much further than a simple modification of certain ideas and a correction of mistakes. In fact, the author went to the extent of indicating the strategy we have to adopt in the struggle against the alliance between the imperialists, Zionists and reactionaries[177]:

"The Arab nation must mobilize all its energies and its full potential in its crucial battle. But mobilizing and mustering all the forces available to the Arab nation quite naturally presupposes, first, that there is unity throughout all the regions surrounding Israel. The logic of the unity that should prepare us for the battle imposes this strategy on us..."

By comparing the level we have to reach with what we have in fact reached, we can lay bare the crisis through which the Arab revolution is going.

"An examination of the real situation of the Arab nation today", says Professor 'Aflaq, "shows that our

177. Id: *Ibid;* 2nd edition.

expectations and hopes belong to the realm of dreams rather than reality. This finding alone enables us to diagnose the crisis in the revolution and criticize its contradictions. If the Arab nation fails today to make an open-minded, unambiguous and positive analysis of the crisis and the contradictions, it will have lost a precious historic occasion... For may years the Arab masses have been forced to approve, without any conviction or enthusiasm, divisions and factionalist projects. In fact, anything that might have led to agreement or reciprocity, anything that might have facilitated the fulfilment of unity was ignored, the better to emphasize the differences. The people had to be prodded into resignedly accepting an artificial situation, which went against the grain of the real revolution. So the nation could only put up with the successive crises and setbacks. It recovered, of course, but was deeply scarred as a result of the crises and the artificial divisions. It will be no less traumatic for the nation, even when it gets back on the road to deliverance, the road to unity and unification in the struggle, the road which will help it recover its lost will and foil the unpatriotic plans running counter to the course and character of the Arab revolutionary venture."

The national reality, said Professor 'Aflaq was in a pathological state, and he went on to explain why, and spelled out the remedies for it.

"What were the factors which led to the Arab nation losing its will? Colonialism and Zionism used every means at their disposal, displayed much ingenuity and pooled their efforts to destroy, from within, the unitary structure set up in 1958 and sow discord among the two revolutionary forces which had built up this unity. Their object was to undermine the Pary's bases from within by promoting factionalist initiatives, harmful internal quarrels and rivalries and big-power alignment policies."

Though the net result of this stage was negative, it did have one positive outcome. Professor 'Aflaq says it enabled the foreign enemy's true face and plans to be revealed, giving us at the same time an opportunity to explain the new criteria on which to base the struggle for unity and show both the level it ought to reach and the means which should help us correct our mistakes.

"This stage helped us to blacklist all the culprits, who nevertheless continue to stir up factionalism and exploit every dispute. But in its blackest moments, confronted by the worst perils, the nation will wake up and take genuine stock of the situation. It will recover its purity, its proper course and lost determination. It will recover its will to live and move forward —a will symbolized by the vast toiling masses, the people who suffer the consequences of the crises, defeats, plots and foreign plans, the people who reject the situation they are in and are determined to fight to change it."

He ended his speech with a call to the militants and the rank-and-file of the various Arab revolutionary movements to foil the factionalist plots and follow the certain and promising road to unity. This, he said, would logically help them to take up the challenge of the Zionists, colonialists and reactionaries.

"The rank-and-file and militants", he said, "of all the progressive nationalist organizations and the armed resistance engaged in the struggle for unity are called on to rise above reformist arguments and throw themselves into this battle on which our fate depends. They are urged to adopt a positive outlook to help create a new revolutionary mentality and build the Arab revolution on solid bases. This will put a stop to capitulation and factionalism and impose unity and freedom."

Answering questions seeking clarification of some of the points, Professor 'Aflaq said this:

"By going into battle and exposing ourselves to dangers, we ought to find a realistic and practical formula for initiating the confrontation with Israel... In the absence of self-criticism, the call to the Arab revolutionary forces to join hands as preliminary for this confrontation will be a shallow and pointless exercise. It is only by being totally selfless and open-hearted that we can persuade the masses to follow us enthusiastically. We must never cut ourselves off from them. We have a duty to shoulder our responsibilities, acknowledge our mistakes, use the same spontaneous language as the masses, and, like them, ignore differences whatever they are, so as ward off the danger of a colonialist and Zionist occupation which threatens the nation's very existence... In the circumstances, the very heavy emphasis laid on the causes of the break-up and on disagreements is a pretext which allows some people to duck the battle. This article is only one of so many contributions, the object of which is to evaluate the extent of the vast plot mounted against the Ba'th party, and which is behind 'the campaign of misrepresentation directed against this Party...' We mus give the party back its authentic image. It is the Party of humanitarian Arabism. We exaggerate nothing at all by presenting it like this. Wordiness can only give an antiquated look to the Party, turn away the masses and foster hatred towards it... We communicate with the masses, with conscious elements that reject opportunism and are convinced that the final battle cannot be joined except in a unity carrying the masses with it."

Michel 'Aflaq's speech at the end of May 1971 gives us an opportunity to point out the principles which give

the fullest significance to the call to revolution, a revolution expected to give rise to a spirit of innovation in the movement and the Arab revolution at large. In accordance with these principles, priority has been given to the concept of unity and the struggle for unity. Reappraising his experience as a militant over the past 30 years, Michel 'Aflaq attempts to analyse the new stage, to anticipate its demands and define the strategy and the means required[178].

"After 30 years of work in this Party", he said, "after 30 years of fighting, of creative initiatives and occasionally even of inertia and slackening off, of confusion and distortions —after all these long years, I can state that the Party might have had a better time if objective and subjective conditions had been more favourable. It might have defined, classified and explained them more scientifically. It ought to have had a more efficient organization and made fewer political mistakes. But this lofty level we were dreaming of was not reached for two reasons —the Party fell down on the job and the conditions at the time were not favourable to it. Any analysis must therefore take these two factors into consideration. One of them arose from the Party, its composition, militants, organizations and methods. The other sprang from the society in which the Party developed. Whatever our aspirations, determination and creativity, we cannot go beyond the possibilities offered to us in the course of a given phase in the nation's history... This requires us to come down to earth and puts limits on what can be achieved. Yet we are free to correct our mistakes, and things will start looking up in the future...

"We have not wasted our time contemplating our shortcomings. However, its is useful, even necessary, to

178. The regular bulletin for mid-June 1971: Lebanon.

examine our movement from the historic viewpoint; after all, 30 years do not add up to much in the history of a nation. At any moment the Party can wake up to its reality and its mistakes, demonstrate its good will and struggle against itself. In this way it will be able to correct its mistakes and shortcomings and build its future seriously. It will put its errors, blunders and even the serious crises which have shaken it to good account, provided it analyzes these scientifically and in the light of the revolutionary experience;provided, too, it compares its own experience with the experiences of other revolutionary movements in the world."

Following this introduction, Professor 'Aflaq continued:

"The image of the Arab revolution as outlined by the Party has not assumed the form of a piece of scientific research. But it is clear, all the same. Besides, we can follow its course from its inception to this day... And it is a single image which keeps coming back always, a single image that catches our view. It is the work of our Party alone, a work which it summarized as follows: unity and freedom, unity through struggle, unity in the struggle to achieve the the Arab revolution's aims... We can verify the sincerity and clarity of the statements given below by referring to the Party's writings:

1. "Unity leads to revolution and revolution to unity."
2. "One region, however vast and rich it may be, cannot alone meet the demands of the battle."
3. "Development projects, to be effective, must be carried out within a framework of unity. They must prepare us for the battle and not be a substitute for it."
4. "Only unity forged in the battle, a unity which can only be the work of a people up in arms, is effective and can stand up to the enemy."

5. "In the situation our nation is in, we have an indispensable historic role."

If we neglect this role, we will be spared neither humiliation nor sorrow, neither calamity nor wretchedness. We must go boldly into battle, organize the resistance and, unflaggingly, pursue the liberation struggle. Our existence depends on this, for it is only by fighting that we can win our livelihood. Without a struggle, our lives will be worth little. If we give up the struggle, we will help the enemies of the Arab revolution to install a system enabling them to carry out their plans for reducing our people to slavery. Apart from the principles Professor 'Aflaq elaborated in his writings in the early '70s, the declaration of the Arab Liberation Front, which is a faithful reflection of the thinking of the Party's founder, and the political report of the Xth National Congress (where he palyed an important role) give a comprehensive idea of the nationalist theory inspiring the Arab revolutionary ideology during the current period.

The Arab Liberation Front's political report answers a fundamental question: what is the course that we should take to liberate Palestine? The only road is that of unity conceived as a "shock unit".

"Unity", says the report, "must necessarily include Palestine. Any attempt to separate the two will weaken the struggle and damage unity."

Following this line of reasoning, the report considers that the previous stage did not correspond to that of the Arab revolution, for the masses did not, in fact, get an opportunity to take part in the battle with weapons in their hands.

This political declaration also goes on to criticize the Arab revolutionary movement. "It failed in its task", it notes, "and by neglecting the popular armed struggle it

did not succeed in bringing about the revolution". And it adds: "So long as it is not motivated by the principles of the Arab revolutionary ideology, the popular armed struggle will not rise to the level of a popular war of liberation".

In this way Arab revolutionary ideology emphasized the ties binding theory to the practice followed in revolutionary action. It establishes the dialectical links between theory and practice, and considers the popular armed struggle as a determining element in Arab revolutionary thought, indeed even as a theoretical complement of that thought. The struggle for unity is henceforth nothing other than a "shock unit" for liberating the nation.

"As from today", notes the political declaration, "the Arab people will give their approval to unity only on condition that its goal, right from the start, is the liberation of the nation. Genuine unity will be achieved only with the participation of the masses whose thoughts turn towards Palestine. Besides, the Arab people will agree to launch the battle only when they are satisfied they have the whole of the Arab nation with them and the participation of nationalist forces brought together under a nationalist organization —forces including all the combatants throughout the whole of the Arab homeland."

The Arab Liberation Front uses these criteria to unmask the real character of the regionalist organizations, the nature of their relations with the struggle for liberation, their line of reasoning and conduct which is aimed at breaking the ties between the armed struggle and the revolutionary ideology.

"Arab organizations", it notes, "as they have always done, want to restrict the impact of the Arab revolution in Palestine so that it cannot alter their social and political situation. With this in view, they do everything

they can to ensure that the Palestinian cause is taken in hand solely by the Palestinians. This will enable them to corrupt the Palestinians and even cushion them against any repercussions of the revolution."

The indivisible links between the struggle for unity and the Palestine liberation struggle are a direct threat to the colonialist, Zionist and reactionary presence. These links also eliminate the contradictions between, on the one hand, the social composition, the reality and the interests of such organizations, (which cash in on the factionalism) and, on the other, the Arab revolution which makes no difference at all between the struggle for unity and the struggle for liberation. The revolution's foes have, as a result, tried to ward off the dangers threatening them directly by adopting a series of positions which the political declaration has clearly indicated.

"Our enemies are hardly unaware that we threaten their interests by proclaiming emphatically that the liberation of Palestine and Arab unity are indivisibly bound up together. They fear the impact of this principle which fits in wich the present conditions and corresponds to the degree of preparation of the masses all throughout the Arab regions. So they are willing to make all sorts of concessions, and occasionally even to help those who enable them to destroy this mutual harmony. This is how they have always acted in all the Arab regions, and today they are working against the Palestine revolution in the same way. They keep stressing the Palestinians are hotheads so as to isolate them from the rest of the Arab nation, and they exaggerate their fighting qualities and their ability to undertake the audacious struggle for total liberation in order to reach their objectives. They will thus force the Palestinians to abandon the fight on the grounds that they cannot continue fighting alone for liberation... The Arab League and other reactionary

organizations still refuse to admit the connection between the Zionist occupation and the founding of the state of Israel, on one the hand, and the curent internal problems of the Arab regions, on the other. They refuse to employ oil as a weapon to put pressure on imperialist countries to cancel all concessions or dismantle all the foreign bases on Arab territory and join in the Arab's confrontation with Israel."

Having denounced the fundamental aspect of the colonialist and reactionary plot to detach the struggle for unity from the struggle for liberation, the political declaration goes on to lay bare the deviationism of so-called leftist regimes and organizations.

"In their attitude to the Palestinian cause, some progresive Arab regimes and leftwing movements are distinguishable from reactionary regimes only by their appearance and not qualitatively. In fact, the difference is barely perceptible. In spite of seeming to belong to the Left, indeed even to the far Left, they have maintained a suspicious silence about the organic ties binding the Palestinian cause and Arab unity, and have succumbed to factionalism. This tacit complicity is betrayed by regionalist initiatives."

The Arab Liberation Front's statement then discusses the activities of the fedayeen themselves. Determined to correct mistakes, it seeks to analyze the real aspects of the defeat, and looks for ways to cope with the crisis and meet the requirements of the struggle for unity and liberation.

"Two years after the defeat, the fedayeen feel more than ever the need to make tangible progress in their initiatives, so that their heroes, those who opted for the armed struggle, may continue on their glorious way."

We, says the political statement, should eliminate all the factors likely to jeopardize fedayeen activity. But the greatest danger "comes especially from attempts to contain the revolution's impact within a regional framework, cutting it off its vital sources, from which it draws sustenance, and the Arab revolutionary masses guaranteeing its sucess. This is how the enemies will be able to foil the revolution in Palestine".

It concludes with a definition of the ways and means for warding off this danger:

"The Arabs must elevate the revolution, where it has taken place, to a superior level if they are to fight back effectively against the Zionist and colonialist occupation and obstruct enemy schemes to split fedayeen activity from the Arab revolution. They will in this way be able to give substance to the popular armed struggle for starting a large-scale war of liberation."

The Xth National Congress, held in March 1970, followed the same line when it defined the ideology and strategy behind the concept of Arab unity in keeping with the spirit of the Arab revolution.

Its political report was based on an analysis of the political situation obtaining in the Arab homeland. It defined the nature of this stage of the revolution and the strategy this imposed on the Party and the political activity which we should follow so as to stand up to Zionism and colonialism. The unitive theory underlying Arab revolutionary ideology becomes apparent from the report which emphasizes the following principles:

"The Arab revolutionary ideology is the theoretical means whereby the revolutionary movement can scientifically explain the historic development of Arab society. Its strategy can only apply this ideology, depending on

the conditions present, at given times and in given areas. The theory should permit discovery of the historic context in which Arab society is called on to follow the evolution of all mankind, whereas the strategy defines the direction taken by the mass movement during the course of a given stage, while simultaneously taking into account the actual circumstances and the secondary contradictions inherent to the particular stage."

2. "Arab revolutionary strategy provides permanent assistance in the construction of a unified, socialist and democratic Arab society throughout the historic phase. As for achieving goals corresponding to the requirements of a particular stage, the tasks are allotted depending on decisive nationalist imperatives requiring precise solutions and on whether the conditions of the period are conducive to reaching the prime goal."

3. "The present period, on which our future depends, is one which should help us confront the imperialist-Zionist enemy. It offers us the means for defending the destiny of the Arabs and protecting it against the Zionists' expansionist ambitions. The Zionists are indeed pursuing an expansionist policy in order to impose peace on the Arabs. So this is the time to take up the expansionist challenge and prepare for the coming battle for national liberation and renaissance."

4. "In the course of this present stage, we must avoid committing the theoretical, political and social mistakes we made in the previous one. We must reject regionalism and anti-popular methods that flout principles. We must spurn adventurism and unthinking, irresponsible acts. This stage provides us with an opportunity to elevate our theoretical deliberations, practical action and the execution of our projects to a higher level reflecting our revolutionary maturity."

5. "The dialectical process, which is natural to the revolutionary experience, reconciles national and social

goals. The break in the equilibrium between these two elements was largely responsible for preventing us from following an order of priority. It made us spend more time worrying about minor contradictions, while the major ones went unperceived. And so we rushed down a false trail which led straight to defeat."

6. "Mere criticism of the revolutionary spirit prevailing before the disaster does not do us any good either, but helps the reaction. Every false interpretation of errors committed during the previous stage or every failure to correct previous deviationist trends does the Arab struggle a disservice and only brings it to a halt. Hitting back at regionalist initiatives exploiting and deepening divisions is a nationalist attitude which rejects regionalist theory and gives priority to unity. Hostility to unity will cease only with the achievement of revolutionary unity within a nationalist framework closely tied to democratic and socialist values. So we must spurn any unity based on individualism and authoritarianism, any unity engendering contradictions."

7. "We should not limit ourselves to criticizing past mistakes during the course of the new stage, which offers us an opportunity of re-establishing scientifically the equilibrium which was upset during the previous phase, and consequently of avoiding the mistakes we previously made. Any misguided respect for nationalist principles which might make us blame social principles for the disaster and drop one of the laws of social change —the class struggle— would result in a mockery of reality. To consider national unity as the cause of contradictions is reactionary, for in fact it offers us the means for solving and transcending them. Neglecting nationalist principles and concentrating exclusively on social principles at the cost national imperatives is counter-revolutionary, reformist and regionalist, and can only hold up the revolution's advance."

8. "The object of the present stage is to permit the Arab struggle to follow its historic path towards unity. So the elaboration of a revolutionary and scientific political strategy will make a vital contribution towards attaining this goal."

9. "Self-criticism testifies to the wholesome turn that revolutionary action has taken after June 5. It helps us look beyond the limited scope of regional reality, prevents us from taking a deviationist road and puts and end to the indecision of the '60s. Unity should not be considered as our only starting point. Yet we must undertake our action on the basis of a unitive reality."

10. "The goals necessarily require that the Arab revolutionary forces be united and grouped around a single revolutionary programme so as to eliminate the basic contradictions of the present stage. They require that the energies of the revolutionary masses be liberated so that the chains that bound us in the previous stage may be broken and a natural situation conducive to revolutionary action recreated."

11. "The present disaster imposes unity on us as a theoretically obvious step and a practical necessity. The Party must be the first to fashion this unity; in other words, it must live up to its ideology. Its social make-up must measure up to the Arab nation's capacities during the course of the present stage."

12. "Any confrontation with the Zionist-imperialist alliance which is not accompanied by a rapid root-and-branch transformation of the Arab reality would be bound to fail. It would only be squandering away the Arab people's strength and potential and would result in a series of disasters. So long as divisive tendencies persist, we will find it impossible to avoid them. Any call for the liberation of Palestine and a popular war, which is not linked to the struggle for unity and socialism, would only be so much rhetoric betraying revolutionary

incompetence and silliness. It would facilitate the execution of plots against the masses, mislead the Arab people, weaken their enthusiasm and debase the struggle."

13. "Only those who have been touched by the spirit of unity can draw the right lessons from defeat. Only the spirit of unity can help us free ourselves and put an end to the direct pressures that regionalism is exerting on us. The Arab outlook is becoming modern and scientific in the course of the present stage. This is evident from their ability to transcend the limits forced on them by factionalism and to find the means for exploiting the Arab potential and the Arab way as an indivisible whole in order to prod the masses along the revolutionary road."

14. "One cannot rule out the possibility that the nature of the struggle in which we are pitted against the imperialist-Zionist alliance may give rise to fascism, racism and the age-old hate which characterize the Zionist movement. We must forewarn the people against the mischief and dangers they can cause. We have to insist on the historic repercussions of the Arab struggle and the humanitarian and civilizing mission which we have to accomplish through our struggle. In this way we will help the Arab nation overcome its colonialist and Zionist foes, lay the groundwork for a new kind of humanism and inoculate it against the diseases which may produce the hate, the fanaticism and the arbitrariness characteristic of Zionism and colonialism."

15. "The battle will be long and decisive. It calls for a total reappraisal of the Arab reality and its structures, as well as a theoretical and practical preparation for adapting all the aspects of Arab life to the requirements of the struggle."

16. "One road, and one only, leads to both unity and liberation. For this we must remove the idea of unity and the concept of the Arab struggle out of its traditional

setting. In addition, we must get rid of every trace of deviationism arising from regionalism and put aside adventurist ambitions which can only snap the dialectical bonds binding the Arab revolution and the Palestinian revolution."

17. "Confronted by the alliance of imperialists, Zionists and reactionaries, we have to work out a strategy in keeping with the requirements of the struggle for unity, which alone can lead the nation to freedom. We must take the initiative in achieving decisive progress towards unity, in creating a large-scale revolutionary climate favourable for mobilizing the Arab nation's material and spiritual potential, and in preparing for the crucial battle in this way."

18. "The scientific and revolutionary strategy which is to give us the means for taking on our enemies calls for a thorough transformation of the information media and a social and cultural revolution. We will thus be able to wipe out all the vestiges of factionalism and put an end to the fanaticism and intolerance which negates nationalism's humanitarian character. It is our business to rouse public opinion, do everthing possible to reach it and communicate with it. We must guide public opinion, steering it away from pitfalls, protecting it from campaigns of misinformation and launch a vast drive to clarify issues so as to prepare the masses for carrying out their mission fully when they get into the battle."

19. "During this stage, the Arab revolutionary movement must undertake to adapt its operational strategy to fit in perfectly with the revolutionary ideology. And it must resist all deviationist temptations."

20. "Once unity has been achieved, we shall have the means to stand up boldly to the imperialist-Zionist enemy. What we mean by unity is not just the coordination of political, economic and cultural systems, but also the unification of the Arab revolutionary forces into a

single national action front capable of leading the Arab masses and applying a political programme which can meet the requirements of this confrontation in every respect. In addtion, fedayeen activity must also be unified."

Drawing its strength from these principles, the Arab revolutionary movement has not shrunk either from self-criticism or from any objective criticism. It plans to go beyond the present stage at the theoretical and practical level and build the next step.

As we have seen, these are the subjects that Proffessor Michel 'Aflaq has broached in his writings. Their aim has been to crystallize the new image of unity as a unitive proletarian concept inseparable from the popular armed struggle; to show that the struggle of the various Arab revolutionary forces should be coordinated and that it should be part of a single progressive front on the scale of the whole of the Arab homeland.

Class unity, which will be the crowning achievement of the struggle for national and Palestinian liberation, will help do away with the holdovers of middle-class and lower middle-class attitudes in all their variations. Unity is the basis on which the Arab revolutionary ideology works out, as it has done in the past, its dialectical conception of nationalism. All the same, to produce a finished theory, we must all study socialist thought and analyze the notion of an emancipating democracy. This is what we shall examine to complete this study of the development of the Arab ideology.

Conclusion

All through this Work we have tried to describe the development of nationalist thought which the Arab revolutionary movement claims as its own. But this account cannot, by itself, help define a fully finished theory which could become polarized around the notion of Arab unity. This is because the revolutionary movement is still looking for an adequate way and so cannot complete its theory. It is trying to remove all the hurdles in its path and is still a long way from its goals. All through the past three decades of Arab history, the revolutionary ideology's prime concern has been to consolidate its general theoretical line, and to denounce any possible deviation from the Arab course or any theory underpinning a deviationist line.

As a result of the continual interaction between the new Arab revolutionary thought and the development of the Arab reality, the revolutionary ideology has succeeded in forging, on the one hand, the broad principles of the struggle for unity and, on the other, the close ties between the fight against factionalism and the various other aspects of the combat, like the liberation struggle against the alliance of imperialists, Zionists and reactionaries, the progressive struggle against under-development, and the Socialist struggle against the exploitation

of the classes and the division of society into classes, which constitute real obstacles in the common struggle for freedom.

The only value of this study, if it does have any value, is that it has examined everything that the struggle for unity had produced in the '40s, '50s, '60s and the early '70s —in other words, the growth of nationalist conceptions, the new theory of unity and the fundamental principles underlying Arab revolutionary action.

This attempt to provide a synthesis opens the way for other detailed analytical studies which will contribute to a precise definition of the theory of unity. Future studies of the growth of the socialist idea, unity and the analysis of the dialectical ties binding the notions of nationalism, democracy and socialism will provide us with a chance to elevate Arab revolutionary ideology to a level of study, research and analysis never before known.

Apart from the sources mentioned in this work, a large part of the theoretical output of nationalist thought deserves to be subjected to a similar complementary analysis. These theoretical writings are the work of a number of revolutionary thinkers directly involved in the struggle for unity. Their observations are essentially, useful in helping us make the effort asked of each and everyone of us, the object of which is the determination of the theory of unity.

For all the militants up and down the whole of the vast Arab homeland, these chapters will be —in spite of all the work which has gone into them— only a few drops of very welcome rain, which will not fail to revive a land that has nearly turned into a desert because of the arid minds of its inhabitants... It is a land which has become the cradle of the Arab revolution —a revolution thirsting for a fighting spirit capable of blazing the historic path which will determine the future of the Arab people.

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